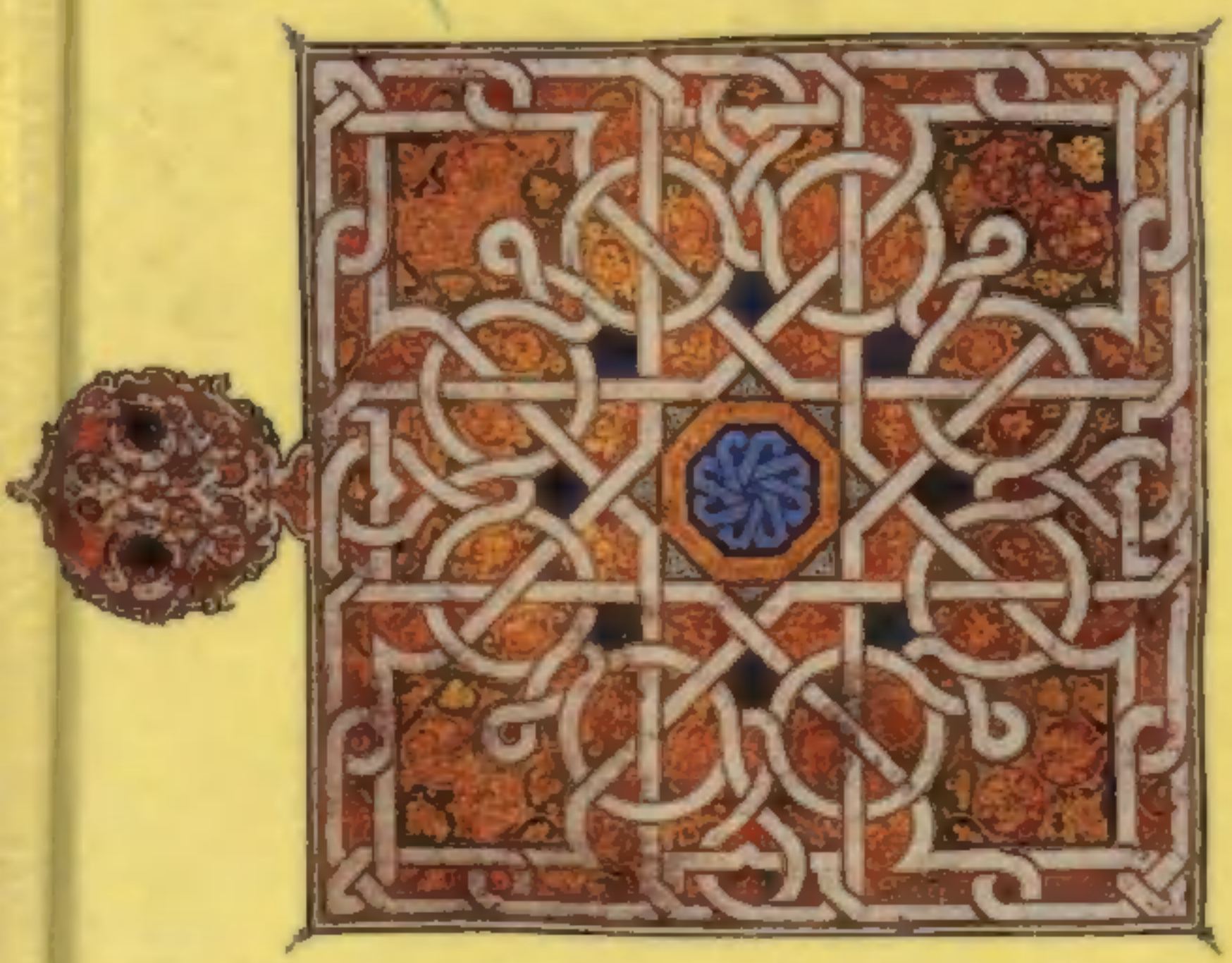
MUHYIDDIN IBN 'ARABI
A COMMEMORATIVE VOLUME



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S. HIRTENSTEIN AND M. TIERNAN

for the

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A Commemorative Volume

EDITED BY

Stephen Hirtenstein
and
Michael Tiernan

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Muhyiddin Ibn 'Arabi Society

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Preface

This book has come about as a commemoration of the 750th anniversary of Ibn 'Arabi's death, at the age of 75, in Damascus in 1240. This is the first time that such a compilation has been produced. In 1965, the 800th anniversary of the Shaykh's birth, a commemorative book was published in Cairo entitled simply *Muhyiddin Ibn 'Arabi*. It was presented entirely in Arabic, with a brief introduction in French, and was aimed at the Arabic-speaking world and the academic specialist. The quarter century that has elapsed between that publication and this one has seen a very dramatic change: the work of the Shaykh has begun to acquire a home among a much wider audience, and there are now full translations of several books available in European languages, especially English, French and Spanish. These include the whole of the *Fusûs al-Hikam* and parts of the monumental *Futûhât al-Makkiyyah*, as well as a wealth of secondary literature.

This volume marks a milestone in this process of 'translation' into the West, both in terms of the quantity of material presented and the number of different people involved. The contributors come from a wide range of disciplines and countries, from the USA to Russia, from Britain and France to the Lebanon and Syria, and their papers reflect a similar diversity of interests. The volume is divided into two sections: Part I is devoted to translations of Ibn 'Arabi's works, most of which are here published in a European language for the first time, and which represent a substantial addition to the translated work available. Part II consists of a collection of specially written studies which examine his teachings, the way they have influenced succeeding generations, and their implications for our own time. All the papers in both sections are self-contained, and may be read in whatever order the reader's interest suggests.

The Editors would like to express their gratitude to all those whose help, support and encouragement have made the whole project possible: to the contributors who have each given so unstintingly of their expertise and who have shown such patience with the lengthy process of production; to the team of translators: Alan Boorman, James Lees, Mohsin Najjar and Cecilia Twinch; to the keyboard specialist, Lyn Cullum, without whose painstaking labours on the typescript none of this could have happened; to Sara Hirtenstein and Katharine Tiernan for their patience, sense of humour, and timely help in preparing parts of the

material; to [redacted] the members and fellows of the Society whose contributions, large or small, have been equally essential and appreciated; and finally to [redacted] Rauf and Dom Sylvester Houédard, neither of whom lived to see the completion of this project but without whom we could not have even started.

We [redacted] that this book is very much [redacted] beginning, [redacted] beginning of the (re-)cognition and (re-)appraisal of Ibn 'Arabi's contribution to mankind. While it may represent the current state of understanding and appreciation of the Shaykh's heritage in the West, this book is but [redacted] tiny offering from the riches to be found in Ibn 'Arabi's works. We hope that what is presented here may serve to foster greater understanding, while what is not here may encourage [redacted] directions to [redacted] found [redacted] taken.

Oxford
July 1992

S.H.
M.T.

Introduction

STEPHEN HIRTENSTEIN

He created us only to worship and know Him. If we gaze, it is upon Him; if hear, it is from Him; if our intelligence, it is towards Him; if we reflect, it is upon Him; if know, is Him; if have faith, it is in Him. For it He who is in every face, sought in every sign, gazed upon by every eye, worshipped in every object of worship, and pursued in the invisible and the visible. The whole world prays to Him, prostrates itself before Him and glorifies His praise; tongues speak of Him, hearts enraptured by love for Him, minds are bewildered in Him.

I am consumed with love for Him
for His manifestation is for my sake
All creation is my beloved
so where, O where is who enraptures me?[1]

Recently described 'the greatest exponent of Divine Love' and traditionally accepted as the Shaykh al-Akbar (the greatest teacher of the spiritual Way), Muhyiddin Ibn 'Arabi is towering giant in the world's mystical literature. His writings, which cover a whole range of subjects, have all taken as their fundamental base and starting point the Unity of Being and the perfectability of Man. The great interest in Ibn 'Arabi in the West has occurred almost exclusively in the twentieth century, in particular in the last twenty-five years, and is evidence of the current demand for all-embracing perspective on Man that will satisfy the penetrating questioner. For seekers after Truth Ibn 'Arabi is great teacher, and the story of his life and work is itself a story of education.

Muhammad b. 'Ali b. Muhammad b. Ahmad al-'Arabi at-Ta'iyy al-Hatimi al-Andalusi born Murcia in south-eastern Spain in AD 1165 (560 AH), during the final flowering of Moorish culture. Although the spelling of Ibn al-'Arabi is technically correct, he is usually referred to simply as Ibn 'Arabi to distinguish him from another Andalusian, Abu Bakr Muhammad Ibn al-'Arabi, the *qadi* of Seville who died in 1148. Both spellings are used interchangeably in this book. Moorish Spain one of the great centres of civilization in Europe for

period of 700 years, famed for its economic wealth and cultural achievements. stood as a crossroads between the Arab world and the European, which the of Judaism, Christianity and Islam intermingled, giving rise to great thinkers like Maimonides and Averroes, and where the major scientific and philosophical works of antiquity were studied passed to the of Europe. Being so far geographically from the of the Islamic world, al-Andalus, as it known, tended to cultivate the purest form of Arabic culture, to preserve its strength in the face of the Christian presence to the north. Ibn 'Arabi came from an ancient and well-to-do Arab family, which originated in Yemen, and his father served adviser to both the Murcian ruler and the sultan of Seville. When he 7 years old, the family moved to Seville, which had taken over from Cordova the major town in south Spain, a city of many races and cultures, where singers and poets mingled with philosophers and theologians.

Ibn 'Arabi thus grew up in atmosphere steeped in the most important ideas – scientific, religious, philosophical – of his day. At a time when communication as we know it non-existent, this was the essential background to his formation, and he showed signs of great potential from a very early age. One of the earliest indications of this can be found in a story he tells of an incident which happened when he about 12 so: 'One day I fell seriously ill and went into a coma, so serious that everyone thought dead. And then I saw (in a vision) some horrible-looking people who were seeking to hurt me. I noticed person, full of grace and strength, breathing out a wonderful perfume which defended me against them and drove them away. "Who are you?" I asked, and this being replied: "I am the *Sûrah Sîn*, I am your protector." Then I regained consciousness to find my father, may God have mercy on him, my bedside in tears; he had just finished reciting the *Sûrah Yâ Sîn*.'[2] The fact that this 36th sura is usually recited over the dead or the dying to indicate that Ibn 'Arabi here underwent a kind of death and rebirth, the preliminary echo of the death of selfhood. The other striking factor in this account is the visionary capacity that he displayed from childhood: this ability to in the world of the imagination and of the is marked, and forms the context for so much of his work.

A few years later there occurred his great seminal vision 'when God called to Himself', which simultaneously situated him on the Way and established him as a master of it. He had been having good time with his friends party (like any normal adolescent perhaps) when he had suddenly heard voice say him: 'O Muhammad, it for this that you were created.' In consternation he had fled to a nearby ruined cemetery where he went into seclusion for time. During this retreat, received direct instruction from the three great prophets of

Judaism, Christianity and Islam: Moses, Jesus and Muhammad. Jesus, who he refers to as his first teacher, 'prayed that I persist in the Way in this low world [illegible] other, and called me his well-beloved. He told me [illegible] practise renunciation (*zuhd*) and abandonment (*tajrīd*).'[3] Moses promised him that he would receive the Divine knowledge known only to God (*'ilm ladunni*), which is associated with al-Khidr, the guide of those who have [illegible] earthly teacher. Muhammad embraced him with the words 'O my beloved, cling to me and you will be safe.' The three elements of this vision, uniquely fused, [illegible] a summary of the great Semitic teaching on the meaning of monotheism, that stretches back [illegible] Abraham: firstly, to [illegible] simply [illegible] goods and possessions but all idea of possession, [illegible] of existence, in the face of the reality of the Divine Being, and to abandon the illusion of selfhood, thus returning [illegible] the original human condition of poverty and indigence; secondly, to be the place of manifestation of the Divine knowledge, which implies proper receptivity and the recognition of God in all forms; and thirdly, to conform as closely as possible to the Prophet, the supreme model of human behaviour, who said 'Follow [illegible] that God may love you' and 'I [illegible] [illegible] human being like you all.'

This single but triple wisdom lies [illegible] the heart of Ibn 'Arabi's writing, and is of particular relevance today for it unites the different streams of Western spirituality [illegible] well as accepting the uniqueness of each person's private path to Truth. Such universality was further corroborated for Ibn 'Arabi in [illegible] later vision in Cordova where he met all the prophets from Adam [illegible] Muhammad. It was [illegible] [illegible] consequence of these extraordinary insights that the eminent philosopher Ibn Rushd (Averroes), then [illegible] old man, asked to [illegible] him and put to him the following question: 'What solution have you found [illegible] a result of mystical illumination and divine inspiration? Does it coincide with what is arrived [illegible] by speculative thought?' To this Ibn 'Arabi gives an unequivocal answer that resounds down the ages: 'Yes and no. Between the Yea and the Nay the spirits take their flight beyond matter, and the necks detach themselves from their bodies.'[4] For those who have thought of Ibn 'Arabi [illegible] [illegible] philosopher and a metaphysician building an elaborate system of thought, this reply is [illegible] definitive [illegible] of how mystical wisdom lies beyond all such mental constructs and is a matter of direct perception or 'taste'.

From 1184 to 1198 he underwent his spiritual training at the hands of various masters in Andalusia and North Africa, and he furnishes us with precious insights into this in one of the sections of the [illegible] *al-Quds*.[5] His first master, al-'Uryabi, confirmed the instruction he had received from Jesus: 'He asked me, "Are you firmly resolved to follow God's Way?" I replied, "The servant may resolve, but [illegible] is God who decides the issue." Then he said to me, "If you will shut out the world from you, sever all ties and take the Bounteous alone as your companion, He will

speak to you without the need for any intermediary."'[6] In typically laconic fashion, Ibn 'Arabi continues, 'I then pursued this [redacted] until I had succeeded'! [redacted] clearly much-loved and appreciated as a student, by [redacted] more so perhaps than an old woman saint of Seville [redacted] Fatimah who lived a life of total simplicity. She used to say:

> Of all those who [redacted] to [redacted] me, I admire none more than Ibn 'Arabi. The [redacted] of you come to me with part of yourselves, leaving the other part of you occupied with your other concerns, while Ibn 'Arabi is [redacted] consolation to me, for he comes to me with all of himself. When he rises up it is with all of himself and when he sits it is with his whole self, leaving nothing of himself elsewhere. That is how [redacted] be [redacted] the Way.[7]

In 1198 this period of training culminated in a spiritual ascension which [redacted] describes in the *Futûhât* and in the *Kitâb al-Isrâ'*, an interior journey that mirrored the *Mi'râj* of the Prophet in which 'I received the meanings of [redacted] the Divine Names, and I [redacted] that they all related [redacted] [redacted] single Named and to [redacted] unique Essence; this Named was the object of my contemplation and this Essence was my very being.'[8]

By the time he left Spain in 1200 [redacted] the [redacted] of 35, never to return, Ibn 'Arabi [redacted] already renowned as a spiritual master. As the Andalusia [redacted] left behind crumbled in the face of the Christian *reconquista*, he travelled into the relative stability of the Near East that had been forged by Saladin out of the Third Crusade. This second phase of his life can be characterized as the accomplishment of pilgrimage, via the tombs of the Patriarchs [redacted] Hebron and the Dome of the Rock and al-Aqsa mosque in Jerusalem, to the Ka'ba in Mecca, where [redacted] spent two years in the company of 'many men and [redacted] of great worth, culture and piety'.[9] This physical journey to the centre of the Islamic world had its spiritual counterpart involving three highly significant meetings which took place within the space of [redacted] year[10]: the first [redacted] with the 'eternal youth' (*fatâ*) who is [redacted] [redacted] the inner reality of the Ka'ba and Ibn 'Arabi's own essence, his true self, whose silent speech inspired the writing of the *Futûhât al-Makkiyyah* (Meccan Illuminations); the second with Nizam, the beautiful daughter of the *imâm* of the Maqam Ibrahim, who inspired the passionate poetry of the *Tarjumân al-Ashwâq* (Interpreter of Ardent Desires); and the third with the Prophet Muhammad in the *mundus imaginalis*, in [redacted] solemn ceremony in which he was invested as the [redacted] of Muhammadian Sainthood and received the 'gifts of [redacted] Wisdoms', becoming the complete heir [redacted] the Wisdom of Muhammad. This investi- [redacted] [redacted] followed [redacted] few months later by his famous vision of the Ka'ba in the form of gold and silver bricks, in which he [redacted] himself as the last two bricks that completed the wall: 'I thanked God [redacted] [redacted] to myself, "I [redacted] to the other followers of my kind (i.e. the saints) [redacted] the Prophet of God is to the other prophets."'[11]

The third phase of [illegible] life from [illegible] until 1240 [illegible] primarily [illegible] of dissemination: it involved [illegible] tremendous [illegible] of travelling and writing. For nineteen [illegible] he crisscrossed [illegible] the countries of the Near East, associating with and advising kings and princes [illegible] well [illegible] his direct disciples, and then in 1223 he settled in Damascus where he spent [illegible] [illegible] 17 years of his life, [illegible] completed the *Futûhât al-Makkiyyah* and the *Fusûs al-Hikam*. Many times, he says, he was told specifically by God [illegible] give [illegible] others of what he [illegible] been given: 'He addressed me particularly, without intermediary, [illegible] than once in Mecca and Damascus, and told me in clear visions, "Counsel My servants." This obligation [illegible] has placed upon [illegible] more than on anyone else.'[12] This counsel springs from an essential identification that [illegible] shown to him concerning the Quranic *Sûrah al-Ikhlâs* (purity), which, [illegible] [illegible] ber, [illegible] originally revealed in [illegible] to the Jews asking Muhammad for a 'definition' of God: 'This *sûrah* revealed itself to [illegible] in the town of Aleppo. I [illegible] in it [illegible] proceeding from it an enormous empathy for me. I [illegible] told: "It belongs to you to the exclusion of other believers." At that [illegible] I understood the allusion, and realized that it [illegible] my essence, the [illegible] of my form, nothing other than my self.'[13] Perhaps the most evident expression of this counselling [illegible] be found in the numerous writings, both small and large, which he accomplished: by the time [illegible] [illegible] the Arab West in 1201, [illegible] had already completed nearly 60 works. Another [illegible] major works were composed between then and 1222. In addition, from the time he arrived in Mecca and met the 'youth', he [illegible] continuously engaged in setting down the enormous encyclopaedia of mystical science founded [illegible] the Qur'an, the *Futûhât al-Makkiyyah*, which [illegible] completed in its first redaction in December 1231. It [illegible] taken the best part of thirty years and he was to revise it and produce [illegible] second redaction between 1234 and 1238. When [illegible] consider that this book alone comprises 37 volumes of manuscript in his [illegible] hand, the sheer output is staggering.

With Ibn 'Arabi [illegible] are stepping [illegible] just into a [illegible] ocean, but [illegible] ocean of Divine truths. It [illegible] awe-inspiring in both quantity and quality. While most authors write [illegible] the [illegible] of 60 very differently from the way they write at 20, all Ibn 'Arabi's writing seems to have sprung from the same maturity of vision, [illegible] if each work is simply [illegible] shift in focus according to the topic under consideration [illegible] the intended audience. His books therefore have the rich flavours of [illegible] [illegible] chef's cooking, [illegible] [illegible] displays the full [illegible] of [illegible] One [illegible] scholar has described this assured quality as 'conceit' but his own explanation is rather different:

> In what I have written I have never had a set purpose, as other writers. [illegible] of divine inspiration used [illegible] come upon [illegible] [illegible] almost overwhelm me, [illegible] [illegible]

> I could only put them from my mind by committing to paper what they revealed to me. My works evince the order of composition, that form was unintentional. Some works I wrote at the command of God, sent to me in sleep or through a mystical revelation.[14]

For example, the *Fusûs al-Hikam*, considered by its commentators to be the spiritual testament of Ibn 'Arabi, was given to him by the Prophet Muhammad in a dream. This quality of the word written through inspiration is what gives Ibn 'Arabi's work its extraordinary luminosity. It equally begs the question: if we accept that these writings spring from a Divine order, which he faithfully transmitted, what is their purpose? For whom are they intended? The posing of such questions is designed to generate a definitive answer, but they raise some general considerations in a field like mysticism where the individual's predilections so often appear to have priority. The emphasis upon the written word and its transmission is very much an integral part of our heritage and culture, and its importance should not be underestimated. While speaking implies the immediate presence of the listener, writing stretches across the boundaries of time to its audience. It may often seem paradoxical that spiritual realization can be extended to a written medium, not in the sense of information about it but as a means for its actualization in the soul of the reader. However, the integration of the human being, with full use of all his faculties in expression of service to Reality, implies such a manner of writing, and the history of all divine revelation in the written word of the Books confirms its effectiveness.

In Ibn 'Arabi's case, this emphasis on writing has had tremendous benefits. First of all, his books have served as a secure anchor for succeeding generations in every spiritual domain, and his teachings have permeated throughout the Islamic world. Some might say this has suffered despite there being many *tariqa* formed after him, but it may be rather that his '*tariqa*' is precisely of the non-formal kind, just as al-Khidr's teaching differs from that of the prophets. Whereas most other saints and mystics have primarily taught through direct personal contact with their students and rarely left a substantial body of writings which expound a complete doctrine, Ibn 'Arabi by contrast is capable of instructing both directly and in book form, and gives us insights into his own experience as well. Another aspect of this security comes also from the authenticity of his writing: a substantial proportion of the surviving manuscripts are either written by him or read in his presence, and we can thus proceed with confidence in the spiritual topography that they depict. The preservation of this heritage in a relatively intact form is in itself remarkable, when we consider the absence of printing, photocopying and other technological wizardry that is taken so much for granted in our modern world.

However, this benefit is not just a matter of being a supreme reference

point. Everyone who studies his work with an open receptivity speaks of [redacted] extraordinary way in which [redacted] can [redacted] read [redacted] way [redacted] time and then when read again later will take [redacted] a completely different light and shade of meaning. This organic process of change in the reader is precisely how the 'greatest master' is [redacted] work. All then depends on the receptivity of the reader in allowing this action to take place: if one reads with the mind alone, it is through that [redacted] the development comes, [redacted] this is why so many have spoken of Ibn 'Arabi's 'incoherence' [redacted] the 'confusion of his mental universe'. If one reads with mind and heart integrated in full attention, then the development may come [redacted] [redacted] much deeper level, [redacted] the movement of '*hayrah*', perplexity in the face of the unknowability of Being. The alert reader [redacted] thus benefit as surely [redacted] if he [redacted] living in the thirteenth century. In whatever way [redacted] looks at it, where Ibn 'Arabi is concerned, it [redacted] [redacted] the normal strictures of time and space do not apply.

The far-reachingness that marks his writing [redacted] made clear to [redacted] in [redacted] [redacted] dramatic way. Towards the end of [redacted] life, in Damascus, [redacted] again [redacted] [redacted] Quranic *sûrah* [redacted] [redacted] being of intelligible form:

> I saw, in [redacted] vision between waking and sleeping, an angel come to me bearing [redacted] particle of white light – one might have said [redacted] particle of the light of the sun. 'What is that?' I asked and was told 'It is the *Sûrah al-Shu'arâ*' . . . Then I felt [redacted] if [redacted] hair [redacted] rising from my chest to my throat, then to my mouth. [redacted] [redacted] [redacted] animal with a head, tongue, eyes [redacted] lips. It extended itself until its [redacted] reached the two horizons, [redacted] and West. After that [redacted] retracted itself and returned to my chest. I knew [redacted] [redacted] [redacted] words would reach [redacted] [redacted] [redacted] the West.[15]

This particular *sûrah*, *al-Shu'arâ* (the Poets), contains, among other things, the famous dialogue between Moses and Pharaoh [redacted] the Divine Quiddity, which is discussed [redacted] length in the chapter of Moses in the *Fusûs al-Hikam*, and especially the lines 'He is the Lord of the [redacted] and the West and of all that is between the two, if you reason.' [redacted] is certainly [redacted] that since his time the influence of the Shaykh's writings has been profound throughout the Islamic world, [redacted] it Syria, Turkey, Egypt, North Africa, Iran or the Far East. The line of transmission from the Shaykh's stepson, Sadruddin al-Konevi, is [redacted] indeed, reaching out [redacted] Fakhruddin 'Iraqi, Mu'ayyid Jandi and Jalaluddin Rumi, to name but [redacted] few. As Dr Austin has pointed out, Ibn 'Arabi stands [redacted] the temporal [redacted] spatial crossroads of Islamic spirituality, between [redacted] previously oral traditions and all that came after, and between Western and Eastern Sufism. At the [redacted] time his writings have aroused much controversy and even direct opposition right up to [redacted] [redacted] time: [redacted] have accused the Shaykh of being [redacted] pantheist or [redacted] heretic, while others have found his teachings disorganized. However, these judgements tend to reflect the attachments, comprehensions and confusions of the reader in the face of the coherence of Ibn 'Arabi's contemplative insight.

it equally yet have any real appreciation of the standing of Ibn 'Arabi, for Dom Sylvester Houédard pointed out, he the medieval founder of the wider ecumenism and it is only perhaps in our own time that this wider ecumenism the heart of traditions beginning to emerge. This implies narrower ecumenism, which is the understanding that in West, or rather the West and Middle East, the three strands of the tradition of Abraham, i.e. Judaism, Christianity and Islam, form distinct family with single root. To imagine unbridgeable gaps between three is to up the unity that already exists. From this central position of Abrahamic tradition, central in the that is, which so dramatically portrayed in Ibn 'Arabi's triple vision, can then look at other traditions and discover the wider ecumenism, the unity that embraces all humans. We can see, then, further dimension to this spiritual crossroads, which is neither temporal nor spatial, but which stands between the interior and the exterior, the meanings and the forms. It would thus belittle Ibn 'Arabi's greatness to limit his teachings the Islamic world in any sense, and it would cover up the fundamental message of hope that he brings for all concerned with Truth. For he is a superlative source of help for all 'My servants': he appeals to all, and although he may not be of appeal to those of a particular way or taste who limit God to the form of their belief and in that, his words intended for those whose real concern is with the meaning and of God's Unity, and who strive to conform to Him rather make Him conform to them. The compassion in this is such that it is up to each one of us determine to which group we belong.

'Everything arises from Him and ends in Him, from Him and returns to Him.' [16]

NOTES

1. *Futûhât al-Makkiyyah* (*FM*) III.449/450, Cairo 1329 AH, 4 vols.
2. Quoted in Claude Addas' excellent biography of the Shaykh, *Ibn 'Arabi quête soufre rouge*, Paris 1989, from *FM* IV.648 (Cairo 1293 AH edition only). I to her for many of the references here quoted.
3. II.49.
4. *FM* I.153.
5. This appeared *Sufis of Andalusia*, trans. R.W.J. Austin, paperback edition, Publications, 1988; the other sections of the work appear in this present volume in translation for the first time.
6. Austin, *Sufis*, p. 63.
7. Austin, *Sufis*, p. 143.
8. *FM* III.350.
9. Austin, *Sufis*, p. 36.

10. These meetings are described in greater detail in several places: Austin, *Sufis*, pp. 36–7, and Addas, *'Arabi*, pp. 238–44, 250–3.
11. *FM* I.319.
12. *FM* I.658.
13. III.181.
14. Introduction to *Fihris*, ed. A.E. Affifi, Revue de faculté de lettres l'Université d'Alexandrie 8 (1954).
15. Quoted in Addas, *Ibn 'Arabi*, p. 339 from the unedited collection of poems, *Dîwân al-Ma'ârif*.
16. *FM* III.451.

PART I

Translations

The Book of the Description of the Encompassing Circles

PAUL [redacted] FENTON AND MAURICE GLOTON

INTRODUCTION

The [redacted] title of the work whose English translation is presented here for the very first time is *Kitâb inshâ' ad-dawâ'ir al-ihâtiya* [redacted] *mudâhat al-insân li-khâliq wa-khalâ'iq*, 'Book of the Description [i.e. drawing] of the Circles Encompassing the Correspondence of Man to Creator and Creatures'. Ibn 'Arabi sometimes refers to it also by the abridged title, *Inshâ' ad-Dawâ'ir wa'l-Jadâwil*, 'The Drawing of the Circles and the Tables'.[1]

Although its Arabic [redacted] was one of the earliest of Ibn 'Arabi's writings to have been edited in the West, it has hitherto escaped translation into [redacted] European language, probably because of its abstruse subject-matter and stylistic concision.

One of Ibn 'Arabi's most important minor treatises, this work [redacted] with the fundamental premises of his metaphysics: the Divine Essence and Attributes, Man as [redacted] intermediary between Creator and Creation, and the author's conception of the Universal Reality (*al-haqîqa al-kulliya*). The work is built round [redacted] pronounced philosophical framework, composed almost in the *kalâm* style and is copiously illustrated with diagrams and tables, hence its title.

The book was written in Ibn 'Arabi's so-called second period, during [redacted] wanderings in North Africa prior to his definitive departure [redacted] the East. A reference [redacted] the work made in the author's *Futûhât al-Makkiyya* provides precise testimony as to the date and place of its composition:

> My sincere friend has already had [redacted] occasion to read [the chapters on] the [redacted] of the beginning of Creation [redacted] our books *'Anqâ' Mughrib* and *Inshâ' ad-Dawâ'ir*, of which we composed [redacted] part in his noble house during [redacted] visit to [redacted] [redacted] the [redacted] 598/1201, on [redacted] way [redacted] the pilgrimage. Moreover, his servant, 'Abd al-Jabbar copied for [redacted] that which I [redacted] written thus far. Then I departed with it that year for Mecca in order to complete it there. However, the present work [i.e the *Futûhât*] distracted me from [completing] it and other literary projects, by reason of the Divine [redacted] which inspired [redacted] [redacted] compose the (*Futûhât*) together with [redacted] wish of certain companions [redacted] sufis, in [redacted] of higher knowledge, who [redacted] to benefit from the blessings of this noble and [redacted] house (Mecca).[2]

Interestingly, this [redacted] is addressed to one of Ibn 'Arabi's masters, the Shaykh 'Abd al-'Aziz al-Mahdawi, for whom he expressed [redacted] siderable admiration. Not only [redacted] he devote to him [redacted] separate work of praise, but he also undertook for him the composition of his monumen- [redacted] *Futûhât*. [redacted] twice frequented al-Mahdawi's circle in Tunis, firstly for nearly [redacted] year in 590/1194 and then again in 598/1201, when he passed through Tunis on his way to Mecca. The *Inshâ'* is therefore the last of Ibn 'Arabi's treatises [redacted] be composed in the West just before his depar- ture for the Orient in 1201, although, as [redacted] have just seen, its redaction [redacted] interrupted and it was probably completed in the East several years later.

The fact that the work is mentioned frequently, not only in the first book of the *Futûhât*, but also in the *Tadbîrât*, poses something of [redacted] literary problem. Indeed, the latter work [redacted] composed [redacted] the latest in 1194, when Ibn 'Arabi [redacted] still in Andalusia. However, if we [redacted] assume, as Claude Addas[3] has done in her biography of Ibn 'Arabi, that the great [redacted] did not always compose his works outright, and sometimes rewrote them over a period of several years, [redacted] may take the date of 1201 [redacted] being that of the composition of the central part of the work.

Regarding the difficulty of the text, it is important to bear in mind its initiatory character. Indeed, as stated in the preface, the [redacted] [redacted] initially intended for the Shaykh al-Akbar's faithful companion, 'Abd Allah [redacted] ad-din b. 'Abd Allah al-Habashi,[4] who together with al-Mahdawi, the latter's servant and Ibn 'Arabi himself, was considered by the author of the *Futûhât* to be one of the four 'universal pillars' (*awtâd*). Al-Habashi first made Ibn 'Arabi's acquaintance in Fez in 594/1198, thereafter becoming his devoted disciple until his death in 1223 in Malatya (Turkey), [redacted] quarter of [redacted] century later. He accompanied the Shaykh al-Akbar throughout all his wanderings in North Africa and the East, and Ibn 'Arabi [redacted] present when al-Habashi [redacted] finally [redacted] [redacted] rest. He had also composed for him in 595/1199 the *Mawâqi' an-Nujûm*, as well as the small treatise *Hilyat al-Abdâl* in 599/1203.

Ibn 'Arabi said of him:

> Pure brightness and limpid light, Habashi, 'Abd Allah by name, is a moon that is [redacted] eclipsed. He teaches the Truth to those who [redacted] deserving and he leads it to them, [redacted] overstepping it. He obtained the degree of discernment. When melted, he is as pure [redacted] the finest gold. His speech is truth and his word is sincerity.[5]

'The Description of the Encompassing Circles' was first edited critically [redacted] the basis of six manuscripts by Nyberg in his volume containing three of Ibn 'Arabi's minor treatises, the *Inshâ'*, the *'Uqlat al-Mustawfiz* and the *Tadbîrat al-Ilâhiya*. This work, which [redacted] the publication of his

doctoral dissertation, was also one of the first studies of Ibn 'Arabi's doctrine to appear in the West.[6] An extensive introduction [illegible] panied this edition, which included [illegible] brief description of each book (*Inshâ'*, pp. 10–14), followed by [illegible] detailed account of Ibn 'Arabi's theosophical system (pp. 29–161), as well as a philological commentary on the Arabic texts (*Inshâ'*, pp. 162–71).

Nyberg's exhaustive [illegible] dispenses us from giving in what follows all but the briefest synopsis of the *Inshâ'*. The central theme of the book is the concept that, in virtue of his microcosmic nature and his having been created in the Divine Image, [illegible] constitutes the link between the metaphysical and the physical realms. At the beginning of the treatise the author [illegible] the purpose of his work in his [illegible] words:

> Know that the object of this treatise is to specify the rank of man in regard [illegible] existence, to discern his station in relation to the degree of Generosity [illegible] to examine the question of his manifestation subsequent to his non-manifestation through his individuated essence.

The treatise [illegible] [illegible] whole can be divided into six parts:

1. Ibn 'Arabi first [illegible] out to define existence and non-existence.
2. Next, he poses the problem of knowledge of things non-existent with a view [illegible] fathoming the question of whether there is pre-eternal knowledge of Man, who is a reflection of the whole of Creation, in the same way as the Universal Reality contains all existential possibilities.
3. In this section, Ibn 'Arabi dwells [illegible] length on the characteristics of the Universal Reality.
4. The author then goes on to define the categories of existence which apply to man in virtue of his divine and human nature.
5. In the latter part of the treatise, Ibn 'Arabi enlarges upon the correspondence between Man and God in relation to the Divine Names designating God's Essence, Attributes and Actions. This is illustrated with the help of [illegible] number of diagrams and tables, which gave their name [illegible] the treatise and whose purpose is to indicate the individuals' spiritual station in relation to their actualization of the Divine Names.
6. These onomatological considerations draw to a close with [illegible] curious, cosmogonical myth concerning the seven guardians of the Divine Names.

In the following translation [illegible] have endeavoured to render [illegible] faithfully as possible the purport of the original Arabic. However, [illegible] must admit that the terseness of the text, coupled with the abstruseness of the metaphysical subject-matter, has defied our complete comprehension in several places. We therefore crave the reader's indulgence for [illegible] imperfections and the Shaykh al-Akbar's forgiveness for any unintentional misinterpretation.

THE BOOK OF THE DESCRIPTION OF THE ENCOMPASSING CIRCLES (*INSHA' AD-DAWA'IR*)

In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate

Praise belongs to God who [illegible] created Man in His Image (*sûra*)[7] and favoured him with [illegible] Secret. [illegible] established symmetry (*mudâha*) and correspondence (*mubâhâ*) [illegible] two premises to obtain Knowledge of Him, assimilating [illegible] either [illegible] the Degree of His Essence and Attributes, or to that of His creatures.

May the action of grace be upon the Prophet, synthesis of the first Principles (*al-mubâdi al-uwal*), token of the degree of Pre-existence, radiant Light without shade,[8] concealed beneath the veil of Incomparability. He is the Reality of Realities, and the first manifested emergence according [illegible] the forms both of created realities and of the Creator, [illegible] much in respect of formal resemblance as of the essential Reality, the Name and Qualification, and also of the dispositions of creatures. May God grant the action of grace to the Praised One, and to his family and companions, and may He salute, ennoble and honour him.

Introduction

When God – may His Glory be proclaimed – gave me knowledge of the essential realities of things in themselves, and when He instructed me, by unveiling, of the realities of their ontological relations (*nisab*) and their dependencies, I first wanted [illegible] formulate them in a [illegible] accessible [illegible] the senses, in order to facilitate the initiation of my companion 'Abd Allah [illegible] al-Habashi.[9] Next, it would also serve [illegible] clarification [illegible] the individual whose [illegible] is insufficiently perceptive, and whose cogitation [illegible] short of their realm. He will then discern the ontological rank which man occupies, and recognize the signal nobility [illegible] possesses, by token of which the angels [illegible] obliged to submit to him by prostrating themselves before him.[10] Now, if the noble and very pure angel prostrated himself before Man, there is [illegible] the more [illegible] for it to [illegible] [illegible] for subordinate beings of the world here below.

Have you not paid good heed to the following divine and truthful verse?

> He has made subject to you all that is in the heavens and on earth, and all comes from Him.
> (Qur'an XLV,13)

subjected whole world to the domination of this most eminent human being. Just no celestial world is elevated by you, the of the terrestrial world exist only to in submission to you, supplicate assiduously, in asking pardon for you, now in praying for you, for an angel of to intercede for you with God Real.[11]

If the veridic Prince (Muhammad) prays for you, the angels have all the more reason to; and if considers you, His Lieutenant the more do the All fruit and bounty act likewise, humbly appealing you to accomplish for your sake the goodnesses that God has therein.

From every reality and subtlety in existence towards you subtle ray, as also proceed from you towards them subtle rays. Now, the number of rays is a function of the number of realities and subtleties.[12] For if Man did not possess 'the excellent constitution' (Qur'an XCV,4), if he not been created in the image of the pre-Existent (*sûrat al-Qadîm*), if he did come from the empire of Truth by of the tranquillity and love brings to Him, would have had existence in relation to him, and the Supreme Pleroma would not have submitted to him; thus would not have occupied the resplendent Station. The possessions, then, in all their forms, would not have presented themselves him, and the bodies of the celestial spheres (*ajrâm al-aflâk*) would not have turned his soul.

So thank God now, O you human being, that the All-Generous and Compassionate has favoured you with the Perfection of this Investiture (*nisba*) and that he has made known to you the significance (*ma'nâ*) of the Realities of this Origin (*nasba*).

Then scrutinize your existence and the place of your rank in relation to your Devoted, and discriminate between what you are and your condition servant. Most certainly, if you accomplish this, you will attend the Enthronement of the Compassionate (*istiwâ rahmanî*),[13] and you will participate in the Lordly Notification (*inbâ' rabbânî*).

I have presented all of that in this treatise which I have entitled 'The Description of the Circles comprising the Correspondence of to Creator and creatures, by sensible and intelligible forms, and by creaturial attributes, as well by the revelation of truths within him by subtle pathways'.

I have drawn diagrams, established comparisons, explained what man, human being as a religious and ethical being (*ihsân*), in order facilitate understanding and lead knowledge.

We ask Him [redacted] formed the Beings for help and assistance by His Grace [redacted] Generosity.

Chapter I

Know – [redacted] may God assist you in the obedience which is due to Him, and place you among those who attain His Knowledge by His mercy – that the object of this treatise is to specify the rank of man in regard [redacted] existence, discern his station in relation to the degree of generosity, [redacted] examine the manner of his manifestation subsequent to his non-manifestation (*ghayb*) through his individuated essence (*'ayn*), [redacted] to know if he [redacted] qualified by [redacted] disposition to be (*hâl*) before his existentiation. Thus [redacted] [redacted] discuss non-being (*'adam*) [redacted] being (*wujûd*),[14] the notions [redacted] which these two concepts refer, and the question whether, between existence and non-existence, is to be found that which is not qualified by either of these two notions.

This chapter is, then, the place for this subject and its knowledge.

Next, if God wills, we shall draw the circles (*dawâ'ir*) and the tables (*jadâwil*), and [redacted] shall trace the subtle lines (*raqâ'iq*) and rays (*habâ'il*). We shall point out the first principles (*usûl*) and derived principles (*furu'*), and examine the differences between analytic (*mafrûq*) and synthetic (*majmu'*) reality, the Names which connect with these, where earth and heaven [redacted] in relation to Man, and explain the modalities (*kayfiyyât*) of the Theophanies (*tajalliyât*) and their hierarchical order (*tartîb*) as [redacted] function of the stations. All of that, then, and other related questions are to be found in the following chapters of this treatise, accompanied by practical diagrams designed to facilitate their assimilation by the student by representing in his mind their meaning in concrete form, thus facilitating their interpretation by impressing them upon the imaginative faculty. The reader will then be prompted [redacted] [redacted] plete his investigation in order to understand the totality of these notions. For [redacted] the principle has entered the mould of form and representation, [redacted] induces the [redacted] to become attached [redacted] it, thereby procuring satisfaction, which will [redacted] him [redacted] the truth referred [redacted] by this representation, henceforth concretized for him. It is for these [redacted] that [redacted] have supplied figures and diagrams.

Know that existence and non-existence are [redacted] realities superadded to [redacted] existent (*mawjûd*) or non-existent (*ma'dûm*) thing, but [redacted] inherent in the existent [redacted] non-existent thing. Thought, however, [redacted] that existence [redacted] non-existence [redacted] two attributes applying to the existent or non-existent thing, like [redacted] dwelling which [redacted] existent and non-existent thing [redacted]

This is why it is said of [redacted] thing, previously non-existent, that it [redacted]

into existence. For persons of discernment, this expression means that the thing, in its reality, is individuated. Hence existence and [redacted] existence express the affirmation or negation of the thing in its individuality. When, then, the individuality of a thing is affirmed or denied, it is possible [redacted] qualify it simultaneously by non-existence and existence [but by different considerations]. This is [redacted] by virtue of [redacted] connection and a relation with time and place. For example, an individual named Zayd is present [redacted] the market and absent from home. On the other hand, if existence and non-existence were qualifications referring to the existent, like black and white, it would be impossible to attribute these qualities [redacted] Zayd simultaneously. Thus [redacted] he non-existent, he could not be existent, just as, if he were black, he could not be white. It is then well established that [redacted] thing [redacted] be [redacted] [redacted] and the same time, simultaneously qualified by existence and non-existence [but by different considerations]. [redacted] is then [redacted] [redacted] of relative existence and non-existence, with the affirmation of being.

If it is established that existence is [redacted] an attribute inherent in [redacted] sensible or intelligible quality and independent of all relativity, it is then necessarily subject to relation, like [redacted] and west, right and left or before and behind. By qualification, no [redacted] existence is designated to the exclusion of another.

If the objection should arise whether it be possible for a thing to be non-existent in itself and still qualified by existence in another field and by another consideration [thus implying] that it would be existent in itself and non-existent by another consideration, we would reply in the affirmative.

All existing things may [redacted] considered under four modes,[15] with the exception of God, may He [redacted] exalted, whereas in relative existence they possess only three modes. The first mode is the existence of [redacted] thing in its [redacted] essence (*'ayn*). This mode is the second in relation to the knowledge which God has of the adventitious realities. The second mode is the existence of [redacted] thing in the mind. This mode is the first in connection with the knowledge which God [redacted] of us. The third mode is the existence of [redacted] thing in speech (*alfâz*). The fourth mode is [redacted] existence of [redacted] thing in script (*ruqûm*).

Our present knowledge of the Existence of God the Real, may He be exalted, presents itself according to these modes, although it may be modified in the future. Indeed such is the understanding we can reach in this present life. Now, I do not know, if [redacted] realize the vision (*mu'âyana basariyya*) [of God],[16] provided for by Holy Law, [in Heaven], whether [redacted] will attain further understanding accruing from [redacted] present theosophic knowledge.

This being the case, God is apprehended [meanwhile] in perception by only three modes.

Were our examination [redacted] include the understanding gained in the life [redacted] come, [redacted] the vision of God occuring [redacted] [redacted] individual, [redacted] could then qualify Him according to four modes.

Verify then this allusion [redacted] have made concerning the knowledge we have of God, Glory [redacted] Him, for this allusion is [redacted] [redacted] be useful to [redacted] discussion.

Next, the modes of being (*marâtib*) considered in relation to us, [redacted] [redacted] have just seen, precede the individuated being or such existence as resembles individuation, or even the existence of disparate elements of an individuated being, [redacted] any form invented by [redacted] being endowed with [redacted] We [redacted] postulate the anteriority of all or one of these elements. Only later [redacted] [redacted] have more [redacted] knowledge and conceive of them in the mind. In regard to God, however, knowledge of a thing pre-exists without reference to time, [redacted] before the appearance of its individualized essence. Hence the existence of a temporal thing in the knowledge of God precedes the existence of a thing in its individualized essence, and pre-exists it. Besides, the fact is that it is in truth [redacted] mystery (*sirr*) which we propose to allude to in this chapter, if God wills.

Chapter II

Section I

Let us explain to you that the existence of the individualized essence ontologically precedes the existence of knowledge, which it equals in pre-existence outside of all temporality. This perspective applies to God. In the case of created beings, we [redacted] explain to you that the understanding God has of the existent in its established essence in [redacted] distinctive mode (*tafsîlan*) comprises [redacted] particular modality in respect of any thing which is qualified neither by existence nor by non-existence, while being non-existent in its individualized essence.

Having given these premises, let us return to explaining the four modes previously indicated. For example:

1. If [redacted] pronounce the name Zayd, we understand the meaning attached to it. (Speech.)
2. Or again, if [redacted] write [redacted] [redacted] Zayd on a sheet of paper, we no less know the meaning of it. (Script.)
3. Zayd, himself, may appear, and [redacted] know well who he is. (Concrete essence.)
4. We may imagine interiorly that [redacted] is here and [redacted] identify that knowledge. (Mind.)

Now, [in [redacted] these cases] the [redacted] is the existence of Zayd according [redacted]

the knowledge [redacted] have of him. Each of these four [redacted] of knowing reveals one single object of reference, unmultipliable whatever the different ways of considering it.

Every eternal [redacted] temporal thing is necessarily subject [redacted] one of [redacted] four modes, [redacted] to [redacted] of them. This being well established and acknowledged as true, we shall add that man is at one and the same time eternal, temporal, existent [redacted] non-existent.

- Eternal because [redacted] is existent in [redacted] knowledge, and eternally conceived of therein. This [redacted] one of the modes of existence already mentioned.
- Temporal, because his physiognomy and individuated [redacted] exist, [redacted] then [redacted] into being.

We conclude from this that Zayd, for example, [redacted] existent in knowledge, but [redacted] existent in his individuality with regard [redacted] pre-eternity. It is thus conceivable to qualify him [redacted] the one hand by existence, and [redacted] the other by non-existence, with regard to pre-eternity. It follows that existence is not an attribute of the existent.[17]

If this is well understood, it only remains for [redacted] to consider that to which knowledge relates. Is it concerned with the existent or with the non-existent? But we shall not know that so long [redacted] we [redacted] not know what knowledge is, [redacted] how [redacted] classify non-existents.

We shall first point out that knowledge means the awareness [of a reality] dependent on the non-existent [redacted] the existent, according to its potential reality [seen as existentiable] in the former case, [redacted] to its actual reality in [redacted] latter. This truth is knowledge in the proper sense of the term.

Non-existents [redacted] of four kinds:

1. The absolute non-existent (*ma'dûm mafrûd*), the existence of which is [redacted] possible, such [redacted] any associate, [redacted] or [redacted] for God, or even the camel which passes through the eye of [redacted] needle.
2. The non-existent whose existence is made necessary (*wujûb*) by a determining agent (*tarjîhiyyan*) through freedom of choice (*ikhtiyârriyyan*) and not by obligation (*idtirârriyyan*). For example, the particular in that which is by nature one, [redacted] felicity in heaven for the believer.
3. The non-existent whose existence is possible (*yajûzu*) such [redacted] the possible [redacted] of [redacted] [redacted] the bitterness of sweetness, and other suchlike things.
4. The non-existent whose existence is by no means possible by choice, but possible in the existence of a particular sort of individual.

Now these two last cases concerning that of which the existence is poss- [redacted] and that which is not possible by choice, is one phenomenon working in agreement with others, truth implying the intervention of [Divine] Will [redacted] excluding [the possibility of human] choice, just [redacted] it implies

[Divine] Omniscience, while dismissing [Man's] freedom of action. It [illegible] thus in [illegible] following two verses:

> He applies the Commandment in [illegible] autonomy (*yudabbiru'l-amra*) (Qur'an XIII, 2)
>
> And thy Lord creates whatsoever [illegible] pleases, and chooses (*yakhtâru*). Choice does not belong to them . . . (Qur'an XXVIII, 68)

Whoever [illegible] attentive to the secret laid down in the Holy Law knows well how to place this matter concerning autonomy and choice.

In [illegible] treatise, we [illegible] explain, God willing, the [illegible] of His being Possessor of will, without choice.[18] [illegible] there exists no contingent (*mumkin*) thing, for all is subject [illegible] necessity (*wujûb*) and impossibility (*istihâla*). Every time the expression *law* (if) appears in the Qur'an – for example: 'If We [illegible] wished', (Qur'an VII,100), [illegible] 'If He had wished', (Qur'an XIII,31) – it is related to the Essential Will (*mashî'a*) by the particle of impossibility (*harf al-imtinâ'*) by virtue of [illegible] pre-existent cause whose non-existence is absurd. Now, opposition to His Essential Will is impossible. Thus, the latter is excluded from the realm of the intelligible (*ma'qûl*) according to the ordinary idea attached to the term, and emerges in the realm of the intelligible according to Essential Reality (*haqîqa*).

Although in this treatise I have mentioned [illegible] of contingency (*imkân*), choice (*ikhtiyâr*), autonomy (*tadbîr*) or any other category irrelevant [illegible] the Essential Realities (*haqâ'iq*), I shall nonetheless employ them in order [illegible] convey the ordinary, current understanding. Whoever harbours reality, however, will understand the level of discourse, and it is with him that I [illegible] discuss the truths, with him I [illegible] communicate!

Those who are unable [illegible] understand these concepts, will take in these [illegible] as they are ordinarily understood, imagining that it is [illegible] of truth. Consequently, each will approach and receive the question in two ways, as divergent as the idea each [illegible] conceives.

Once that is well understood, know that knowledge (*'ilm*) is concerned with only three of the [four] modes [described above].

No knowledge falls within the sphere of the non-existent whose existence is [illegible] possible, since the non-existent is [illegible] possible reality, given that knowledge relies only on an existent, [illegible] [illegible] on [illegible] non-existent. Indeed, knowledge [illegible] [illegible] imagined as related to pure non-existence, given that the latter is not subject to any formal description and, further, is not conditioned by any characteristic and, moreover, is characterized only by pure negation. The latter does not allow the actualization of anything in [illegible] mind, for if a thing could actualize there, it would already have an existence.

Non-existence [illegible] has existence in any way, and consequently is not subject to conceptualization.[19]

Have you not considered your knowledge relating to the negation of [redacted] associate with God, may He be exalted? Whether you meditate on what occurs to your mind [redacted] what your heart understands of the negation of any associate [with God], you will find nothing but Unicity (*wahdâniyya*) [after the elimination of all contingent [redacted] limited reality], Unicity which is existent, and confirmed by the mind.

If you have difficulty in accepting this point, resort to another consideration, namely, that the associate in question is known to you, exis- [redacted] in his concrete reality which he [redacted] amongst mortal beings, for example, Zayd. The attribution (*nisba*) by which you establish a relationship of association about Zayd is existent by its concrete reality, without your [necessarily] putting it in relation to God.

Consider well that the knowledge you have of the impossible refers [redacted] the knowledge you possess of distinct existent things in the phenomenal world, for if it were not thus, you would not understand that they were inapplicable to God.

When you imagine knowledge of [redacted] non-existent, [redacted] presents itself to you either [redacted] the existence of [redacted] paradox or [redacted] the existence of [redacted] condition which justifies its negation, or else [redacted] the negation of [redacted] relation of certain things [redacted] another thing by [redacted] of a reality inherent in the latter thing, of which you are aware. Consequently you deny in relation to that thing the qualifiers by which that reality cannot be described, while applying them to another entity by reason of another existent reality which can be thus qualified.

Realize this question well. It will profit you, if God wills.

This then is the first section, concerning non-existents of all sorts.

As to the other aspects, we shall consider them either as [redacted] necessity (*wujûb*) [redacted] a possibility (*jawâz*), or as an impossibility of free choice (*mahâl ikhtiyâr*) despite the hypothesis of the existence of an individual of this kind. When a question refers to existence, the knowledge which concerns it, identifies it and allows it to be understood.

Section II

Know that there would not have been pre-eternal knowledge concerning man, had he [redacted] been created according to the [Divine] image, since the knowledge which attaches pre-eternally to temporal being [redacted] and is unceasingly obtained only by reference to the existent, eternal form according to which it [redacted] created. The whole world is without exception constituted according to the form of Man, and the latter equally conforms [redacted] the image according to which Man was created. Knowledge then is dependent on non-being only insofar [redacted] it depends upon its existing counterpart. Understand then!

Once you have acknowledged this point, you [redacted] possibly ask: 'I would like to know how it is that knowledge depends [redacted] the non-existent, knowable object, [redacted] existence of which is possible. For I understand from what you say that [redacted] necessitates [redacted] [redacted] of vision, [redacted] that knowledge is obtained [redacted] time of vision or else in [redacted] virtual time when the visionary [redacted] placed beyond [redacted] reach of time, [redacted] is [redacted] say that knowledge is obtained at the very moment of the vision of the knowable, by visual perception or its equivalent, or by the equivalent of its object or, lastly, [perception] of the [constituent] [redacted] of its object?'

[Our answer to that is that] it is [redacted] you have understood and indicated. In my view such is [redacted] [redacted] of all knowers, without exception. I will, however, [redacted] your attention to the objections which you have passed over in silence, whether out of respect, or through fear of the unintelli- [redacted] of blinded hearts. Your knowledge will give you [redacted] to what I have hinted at allusively.

Know then that the concrete presence of individual members of a type is [redacted] [redacted] condition for the dependency of knowledge upon the knowable object [redacted] the time of perception. On the other hand, a necessary condition [redacted] that one single specimen be extant, or, alternatively, several separate constituents which, when united, form [redacted] knowable existent which [redacted] [redacted] [redacted] an analogy for that which remains inexistent.

Consequently, your knowledge is equivalent to the dependency, which your vision has, upon that existent and reality. It is not the perception of sounds, for example, which constitutes knowledge of their essences. Essences are known by immediate perception (*ru'ya*) and this is true of every knowable thing, [redacted] stated above; whereas that which remains inexistent is truly perceived as [redacted] reality within you, [redacted] [redacted] of its being analogous to the prototype of the separate [redacted] particulars.

Every knower is necessarily existent in himself and is a knower of himself and by himself. Whereas every other knowable thing is either in conformity to his perfect [divine] image in which he will be a representative of man, or else a fragmentary image.

In this respect, he is the knower of the knowable objects, for [redacted] knows himself and this knowledge is extendable.

So apply this fully in every existent without limitation, although you [redacted] guard against anthropomorphism if you reach the Divine Presence! Such [redacted] approach is [redacted] product of the perception of analytic reality within synthetic reality. [redacted] [redacted] perceive synthetic reality only from the point of view of present and temporal analytic reality, in order then [redacted] perceive in that synthetic reality a potential analysis subject [redacted] contingency.

Understand well what [redacted] [redacted] alluding to in the expression: 'fully in every existent without limitation'.

Whatsoever is created in a certain form, that form also corresponds to [redacted] created thing. Thus by contemplating that form, [redacted] may contemplate the entity in whose form it was created; and by knowing one's soul, one may know the entity in whose form it [redacted] created, without that entity being diminished.

When you have realized this within you by hearkening, and when the Holy Spirit has [redacted] it into your innermost heart, lend [redacted] [redacted] have your heart present. Concentrate your mind and purify your reflection for what I [redacted] going to teach you, if God wills!

Section III

Know that things exist solely according to three modes, [redacted] that knowledge depends exclusively [redacted] these modes. That which is other than these three modes is pure non-being, neither known, unknown nor [redacted] function of another thing.

Once you have grasped that well, we shall add that these three modes comprise:

1. That which is qualified by existence in itself, i.e. existence *per* [redacted] in its concrete reality and whose existence cannot proceed from non-being; it is absolute underived existence, which no thing pre-exists. Moreover, it existentiates all things, [redacted] them, determines them, distinguishes them and rules them. It is unlimited, absolute Being. Such is God, the Living, the Everlasting, the Omniscient, the Willing, the Omnipotent, to Whom 'no thing is similar, though He is the Hearing and Seeing' (Qur'an XVII, 11).
2. That which, existent through God, is limited being. The latter includes the world, the Throne, the Pedestal, the Supreme Heavens, the [redacted] of the world, the atmosphere and the Earth, the Animals, Insects, Plants and those who live there, and all the other possible realities. This mode was not *per se* existent before being [brought into existence] without any lapse of time intervening between [redacted] and its Creator by which it either preceded, or followed Him. We can never say of it that it is anterior [redacted] posterior. [redacted] is then anterior by existence, like the anteriority of the past in relation to the present. In reality it is outside of time, since it is Time itself. The non-existence of the world is not situated in time, but [redacted] reckon, [redacted] imagine, that between existence of the True and that of creation, there is [redacted] period of time. This concept comes from temporality which sense-perception is used to in connection with temporal realities.
3. That which is neither qualified by existence nor by non-existence, neither by temporality (*hudûth*) [redacted] by primordiality (*qidam*), but is forever intimately bound to the Eternity (*azalî*) of God the

[redacted] It [redacted] impossible to apply to it anteriority [redacted] posteriority, or other correlative terms, just as it is impossible to apply them [redacted] God, especially [redacted] it is not an existent. Now, temporality and eternity belong in the category of relative concepts which allow [redacted] certain truth to be communicated [redacted] the intellect. [redacted] the world not existed, we could [redacted] have qualified Necessary Being [redacted] pre-existent in relation [redacted] [redacted] latter. Besides, [in support of this assertion] [redacted] that Revelation [redacted] [redacted] mention the name 'Eternal', but rather those of 'First' [redacted] 'Last'. In the same way, if you [redacted] [redacted] existed, it could not have been said of you, 'before' [such a person] [redacted] 'after'[20] [such a person], since, [redacted] that moment, the link [your person] associating these two concepts [redacted] not exist. There is then no first [redacted] [redacted] [with regard to God]. It [redacted] the same for the two Divine names, 'the Outward' [redacted] 'the Inner', and so [redacted] for [redacted] the names implying relation, [redacted] that there [redacted] One Absolute, Unlimited Existent without reference to anteriority [redacted] posteriority.

Chapter III

This third Entity [Universal Reality], which is qualified neither by existence [redacted] by non-existence, has the [redacted] standing as Necessary Being – may [redacted] Glory [redacted] proclaimed – in relation to [redacted] negation of primordiality and posteriority when disregarding [redacted] [existence] of the world.

In the same way, it is no more qualified by the whole than by the part, and accepts neither augmentation nor diminution. In our words, 'anteriority or posteriority or other correlative terms', the last-named points to the [redacted] of being neither existent nor non-existent, [redacted] qualifiable by first and last.

Know well also that the world in relation to this Entity is [redacted] posterior, [redacted] is it located in relation to it, since the very notion of place is inherent in the world. Now the Entity is the foundation of the world, of simple substance and the sphere of life, whereas created things are joined to it [redacted] is all that is world, [redacted] proceeding from the Absolute Existent.

It is from this third Entity that the world proceeds. It is the intelligible [redacted] universal Reality of Realities of the world. It is [redacted] universal and intelligible reality subsisting in the mind (which reveals itself in eternity [redacted] eternal, and in temporality as temporal). If you express the view that this thing is the world, you will be right, and if you say that it is God the Real and that it is pre-existent, you are again right. If you say that it is neither the world nor God the Real, may [redacted] be exalted, and that it implies [redacted] independent, principial concept, you [redacted] right. All that is true of it. [redacted] is the All-embracing Universal which includes the temporal and the eternal, increasing by the multiplicity of existents without how-[redacted] subdividing by their fractioning, nor dividing by the division of

concepts. It is neither existent [illegible] non-existent; it is not the world, [illegible] yet it [illegible] is; it is other without being other, given that otherness implies [at least] two existents, whereas [illegible] implies matching – which itself is [illegible] – of [illegible] thing to another, resulting in a third notion qualified [illegible] form.

If for example [illegible] to construct [illegible] triangle, [illegible] bring together elements which join up in [illegible] certain way, to form three angles. We shall then say that what we have [illegible] triangle. The features of this, according to its shape, configuration, colour, and state, constitute concepts in [illegible] All-embracing Universal, in the same way as do angels, human beings, intellects and other realities according [illegible] quantity, volume, situation, and action. [illegible] by the bringing together of particulars which are ruled by the universal archetypes that [illegible] world of distinctiveness comes to [illegible] in higher and lower modes, with [illegible] other differentiation than that which results from the estimative faculty. This is [illegible] aspect of your saying rightly that this Entity covers the notion of world, whereas you would be right the other way around, were you [illegible] say the opposite. For the world [illegible] sheer non-being and [illegible] then qualified neither by existence [illegible] by privation. Pre-eternal knowledge applies to the analytics which this Universal Entity contains, [illegible] we have previously shown, in the [illegible] way as [illegible] knowledge depends on certain particulars. Although dependent on their non-particularized, universal syntheses, the Entity can particularize them when [illegible] wishes, and that constitutes [illegible] mystery! The knowledge we have of the Entity is of this [illegible] by very [illegible] of the symmetry existing between [microcosmic] Man and God.

This is what Imam Abu Hamid al-Ghazali alluded to when he stated: 'There is not, in possibility, a better world than ours.' For, if there [illegible] one, and God had withheld it, [illegible] would have demonstrated both powerless and avarice, which would have been incompatible with His Omnipotence as much as with His Generosity! For that reason, the possibility [of a better world] is excluded. In [illegible] view, this observation [of Imam al-Ghazali] is not confined to [illegible] particular aspect, but we would [illegible] that this matter finds its [illegible] perfect expression in Man, since the latter has been created in the image [of God]. Understand then!

It is because Man is also a symbol leading to divine knowledge that he must exhaust all the principial possibilities, for if one [illegible] to be missing, [illegible] would no longer be that suitable symbol, capable of leading to [illegible] complete gnosis. However, since [illegible] [illegible] that gnosis does entail completeness, then consequently the symbolic value of man [illegible] be suitable. On this matter, the Prophet, [illegible] him be the Grace and Peace of God, said, 'Whoso knows his soul, knows his Lord.'[21]

To return to our subject, [illegible] [illegible] add, [illegible] the matter of this Third Entity, whose reality none can describe, [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] hint [illegible] it by way of comparison and an analogy. In this way, it is distinct from God who is

[illegible] subject to comparativity (*mithâl*) except in respect of His acts. Not that a [comparison] would express the reality [of the third Entity], for then we could define it, and that is impossible; indeed, God has said, 'They do [illegible] comprehend Him by knowledge,' (Qur'an XX, 110). We shall explain that in relation to the world, this Entity, undefinable [illegible] unqualifiable by existence or non-existence, [illegible] by temporality or eternity, is [illegible] the relation of wood [illegible] the chair, the chest, the pulpit, the litter, or, again, like silver [illegible] the utensils made of it, such [illegible] collyrium-bottles, earrings or rings. By these examples, the reality [of this third thing] is clear.

[illegible] this comparison but without imagining this Entity could [illegible] reduced in the same[illegible]y as a piece of wood is reduced in the making of an object. Know that the piece of wood is also [illegible] particular form within the concept of 'wood-ness'. The universal, intelligible reality of 'wood-ness' undergoes neither decrease nor variation, but perfuses [illegible] [illegible] every wooden object integrally, without anything being subtracted [illegible] added, even if, in respect of its form, the object is composed of numerous realities, like, for example, the quality of the wood, its size, its appearance or its layout. The concept of 'woodness' encompasses all these forms. The same would be true of any wooden object such [illegible] [illegible] chair [illegible] pulpit.[21]

This Third Entity comprises to perfection all these realities. Call it, then, if you will, the Reality of Realities, Hylé (*hayûlâ*), Primordial Mat-[illegible] (*mâdda ûlâ*) or the Root of roots. Name the realities which this Third Entity includes, either primordial realities or else supreme roots. This Third Reality cannot, in its pre-existence, separate from Necessary Being, as being [illegible] corollary, without for all that having an existence individualized in itself (*'ayn*), devoid of emplacement and orientation. Indeed, had we presupposed it to [illegible] existent, but unendowed with characteristics, it would have been devoid of space [illegible] direction. [illegible] then the content of this chapter, and absorb it.

Chapter IV

Having discussed the categories (*aqsâm*) of non-existents (*ma'dûmât*) and explained their hierarchical degrees (*marâtib*), [illegible] should now like to discourse upon existents (*mawjûdât*) and their categories. Several classes [illegible] be considered:

1. An Absolute Existence (*wujûd mutlaq*) whose quiddity (*mâhiyya*) cannot be grasped by the mind. Indeed, neither quiddity [illegible] quality (*kayfiyya*) may be applied to it. Moreover, no essential attribute (*sifa nafsiyya*) [illegible] [illegible] predicated of it. This category refers [illegible] God, [illegible] [illegible] be exalted.

The [redacted] knowledge [redacted] may gain of Him, [redacted] this moment, is through negative attributes (*sifât al-salb*), such [redacted] expressed in the verses, 'No thing is like Him,' (Qur'an XLII, 9); and 'Glory [redacted] your Lord, the Lord of Irresistible Might beyond that which they assert,' (Qur'an XXXVII, 180). According to what [redacted] have previously indicated, knowledge [redacted] depend on an existent. In the present case, knowledge depends on the negation of all that is inapplicable [redacted] God, Glory to Him and may He [redacted] exalted. The negation of that which [redacted] inapplicable to Him is affirmed in us, existent in us, connected to us. Here then is the first category.

2. A non-material existent (*mawjûd mujarrad 'an al-mâdda*). The latter refers [redacted] the spiritual, separate intelligences (*'uqûl mufâraqa*), which are able [redacted] assume configurations (*tashkîl*) and forms (*taswîr*), and possess luminous rays. They [redacted] called 'angels', who are neither located in space, nor do they occupy [redacted] particular place because of their substance, nor do they possess either composition [redacted] determined form.

   Now, if the form which appears in them is spacializable, [redacted] is an eminent and subtle mystery. In this respect they are igneous spiritual energies (*quwa rûhâniyya nâriyya*), designated by the term 'jinn', although they are subject to the constraint of nature. Heat, however, is [redacted] of their essential attributes, and in this they are unlike the angels, who are not thus constituted.[23]

3. An existent capable of being spacialized (*tahayyuz*) and localized (*makân*). This refers to the celestial bodies (*ajrâm*), gross bodies (*ajsâm*), non-composite substances (*jawâhir afrâd*), according to the Ash'arites.

4. An existent which is by its essence not capable of spacialization, but is subject to it by involvement (*tab'iyya*), without its subsisting in itself. It remains inherent in other existents. These are accidents (*a'râd*) like blackness, whiteness, etc.

5. Relational existents (*mawjûdât nisab*) which came about between the [redacted] and accidents; like space (*ayn*), condition (*kayf*), time (*zamân*), quantity or number (*'adad*), volume (*miqdâr*), relation (*idâfa*), position (*wad'*), action and passion.

Each of these existents is sub-divided into several categories which we need not deal with here in detail. Let us nonetheless mention:

(a) place and position, like top and bottom, and so on;
(b) quality, such [redacted] health and sickness and other states;
(c) time, like past, present and future, day and night, the hour and that which answers the question, 'when?';

(d) quantity, like measure, weight, [redacted] of distance, [redacted] and prosody, [redacted] others which relate to the question, 'how much?';
(e) relation, like father and son, [redacted] (and servant);
(f) deposition,[24] like idioms and statutes;
(g) action, like immolation;
(h) passion, like the death which results from immolation;
(i) (state [*hâl*]).[25]

We have here categories in the restricted sense, for the notion of existent, in its totality, is comprised of ten categories, taking [redacted] of substances [redacted] accidents.[26]

[redacted] alone amongst the beings enumerated combines all these eight categories just mentioned, whereas they are found separately elsewhere in the universe.

When the Holy Spirit [redacted] breathed into man, [redacted] bound himself to the Absolute Existent with [redacted] sanctified, principial attachment. Such is his participation in the Divine Activity. That is why we acknowledge man as having two dimensions, one external, the other internal.

[redacted] external dimension corresponds to the world in its totality, [redacted] forming to the categories we have identified.

His internal dimension corresponds to the divine presence.

Man is the Universal (*kulli*) *par excellence*, since he is capable of receiving all of the categories together, [redacted] they eternal [redacted] temporal, while other existents do not posseas this property.

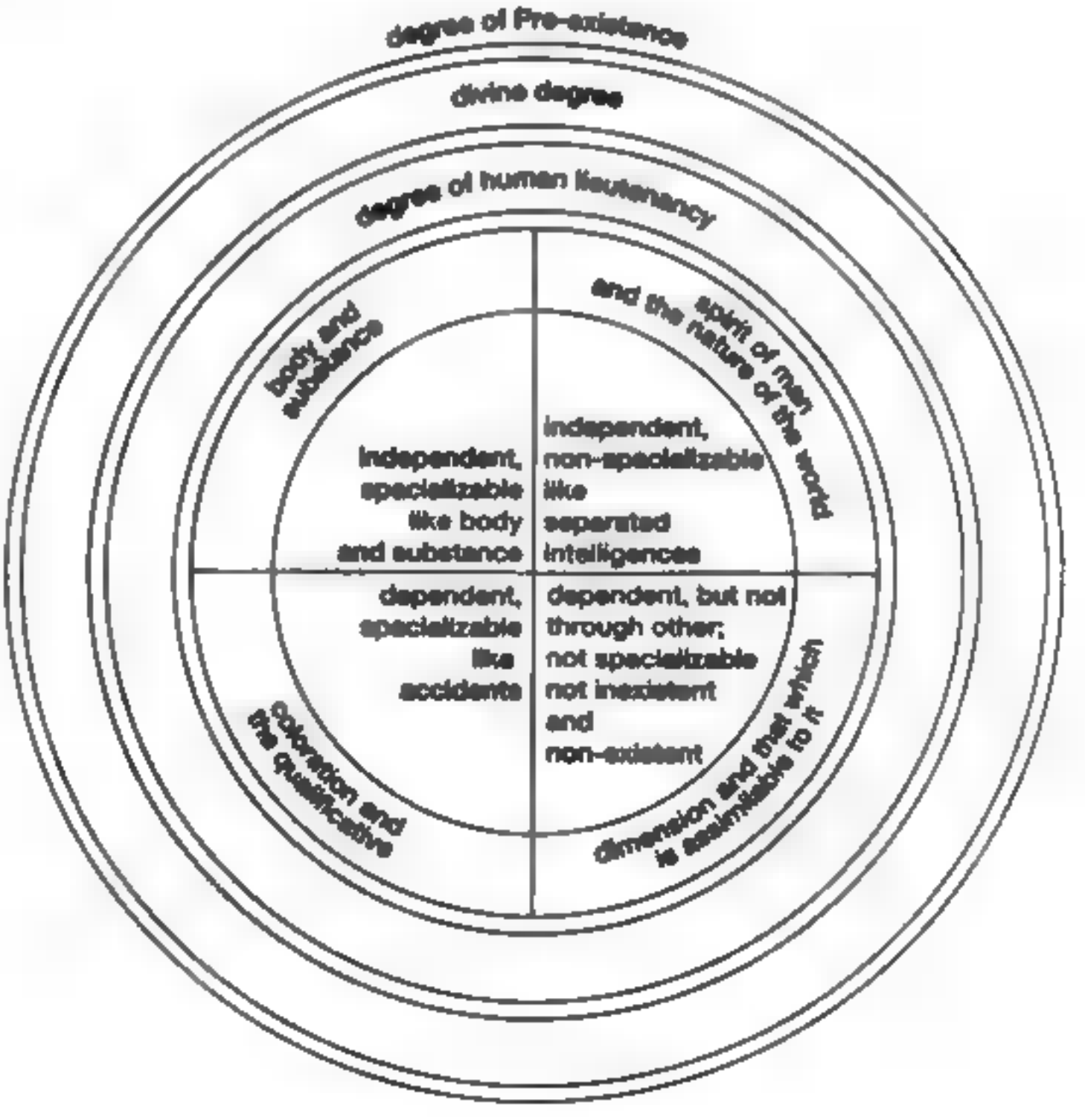
Not every part of the world is pervaded by Divine Sovereignty, and, on the other hand, God necessarily does not receive servantship, although the world, [redacted] its entirety, is [redacted] servant, and God the Real, alone, is [redacted] Unfathomable, Divine Sovereign (*ilâh wâhid samad*). Indeed, the opposites of Divine Sovereignty cannot be attributed to Him, just as the opposite of adventitious qualities of servantship cannot [redacted] attributed to the world.

[redacted] [redacted] two dimensions of perfection. By the first, he accedes to [redacted] degree of divine manifestation, and by the other, to the degree of existential manifestation. On the [redacted] hand, he is spoken of [redacted] from the fact of his being subject (*mukallaf*) and that he comes into existence after the fashion of the world after having been non-existent. On the other hand, he is spoken of [redacted] lord (*rabb*) by virtue of his office as lieutenant (*khalîfa*), his form (*sûra*) and the 'most beautiful constitution' (*ahsan taqwîm*); cf. Qur'an XCV, 4. He is like [redacted] isthmus (*barzakh*), between [redacted] world and God the Real, [redacted] epitome (*jâmi'*) of [redacted] creaturial world (*khalq*) and that of metaphysical reality (*haqq*). [redacted] is the dividing line between the degree of divine manifestation

and that of the world of generation (*kawniyya*), like the imaginary line separating light from shadow. Such is his reality.

Total perfection belongs to him both in temporality (*hudûth*) in Eternity (*qidam*), while God the Real Absolute Perfection in Eternity (*qidam*), for He is exempt from temporality and transcends it. The world total perfection in temporality, being exempt from Eternity (*qidam*), since it is lower than that degree. Man then has become synthesis. For that, may God be praised! There can be no reality more eminent, existent more pure, exemplified by the Prophet Muhammad Moses, the same time there can be no reality vile and impure, as Abu Jahl[27] Pharaoh of kind. Realize well what the 'most beautiful constitution' is and place it the of the Obedient Brought Close.[28] also what reality of the lowest of vile beings is, and place it the centre of the Denigrating Unbelievers.[29] Glory to Him, Who 'no thing resembles, He is the Hearing and Seeing' (Qur'an XLII, 9).

Chapter V


degree of Pre-existence
divine degree
degree of human lieutenancy
body and substance
spirit of man and the nature of the world
independent, specializable like body and substance
independent, non-specializable like separated intelligences
dependent, specializable like accidents
dependent, but not through other; not specializable not inexistent and non-existent
coloration and the qualificative
dimension and that which is assimilable to it

The Diagram of Transcendence

The above figure represents the of concentric circumferences and relation of Transcendence (*tanzih*) immanence (*tashbih*).

The white ring between the two black circumferences represents the divine degree in the mode of transcendence. Since this ring encompasses every thing, the Quranic words apply to it, 'And God every thing', (Qur'an IV, 126); and 'God encompasses every thing in knowledge,' (Qur'an LXV, 12).

The white ring adjoining it on the inside and bounded by the red circumference symbolizes circle of Man.

The ring between the red circumference and the limit of the divine degree symbolizes the correspondence of Man with divine degree.

The zone between the red circumference and the smallest circumference symbolizes the correspondence of Man with world of generation.

The grid schematically represents the number of worlds. The smallest circumference around the centre is that of the world which exercises his lieutenancy and guardianship.

The four rays, from the centre to the circumference, are divisions between the worlds.

Contemplate this figure, and discover the mystery have thus presented. God the Guide and there is no other Lord than He.

The Diagram of Primordial Matter

Primordial Matter is represented by the circumference which comprises the existents (*mawjûdât*) [illegible] general, unconditioned manner. It encloses [illegible] knowable realities, existent, inexistent and non-existent. It implies Intelligible Life, eternal in Eternity and temporal in temporality, [illegible] includes Knowledge and Will. If [illegible] could be imagined, its configuration would [illegible] thus. In any case, the fact that it is intelligible, knowable by us, [illegible] that [illegible] can imagine it in symbolic form, but schematically. Now, the inner space which symbolizes Primordial Substance (*jawhar*) points to any independent essence (*dhât*), [illegible] it eternal [illegible] temporal.

The 'accident' segment symbolizes all dependent [illegible] All sorts of accidents could [illegible] brought in here: for example, generation (*kawn*), colour, etc., [illegible] well [illegible] qualities like Knowledge and power. It is the [illegible] for the 'categories' segment, as you [illegible] observe, by [illegible] Will of God, within the ring.

Know that the diagram of Primordial Matter symbolizes the Reality through the matter of which God brought about the higher and lower existents. It is then the Matricial Prototype (*umm*), which includes all existents. It is a reality which is intelligible to the mind without being existent in the individualized essence (*'ayn*); that is to say, it bears [illegible] substantial form, although it is, in relation to existents, [illegible] unspecified reality, unaffected by growth or decrease. Its essence proceeds from the emergence of the individualized essences of existents, be these eternal [illegible] temporal. If it were not for the individualized [illegible] of existents, the mind could [illegible] grasp Primordial Matter, and [illegible] could [illegible] have known the reality of existents.

Its existence is, then, dependent on [illegible] of particulars. Now, the analytical knowledge we have of these depends upon the knowledge we have of Primordial Matter. Indeed, one who does [illegible] know Primordial Matter [illegible] discriminate amongst existents. He would say then that mineral, angel and the eternal are one and the [illegible] entity, given that he does not know the realities, [illegible] in what way existents [illegible] distinguished from each other.

Primordial Matter then pre-exists knowledge, and becomes manifest through existents. When posteriority (*ta'akhkhur*) is applied [illegible] it, it is in virtue of the posteriority of the existence of the particular, and [illegible] by relation to its determined essence, for, in that case, it is an intelligible universal which cannot be qualified by existence or privation; rather, it is the substratum (*mâdda*) of all existents. it appears in its perfection by the manifestation of the existents, and, in this perspective, nothing can remain inexistent. This is why the Imam [al-Ghazali] [illegible] able [illegible] say, 'There is not in Possibility (*imkân*) a better world than ours. For if there were and God [illegible] withheld it, it would have been avarice incompatible with His Generosity, [illegible] powerlessness incompatible with His Power.'

Now, to describe God thus is quite impossible and such a conclusion unthinkable! If, [illegible] to this world, He [illegible] existentiated others, without end, these would have been analogues of this [illegible] It would [illegible] have been possible to add another reality which did not exist in this world. If [illegible] is impossible to [illegible] any reality, then [illegible] is impossible that there can [illegible] a [illegible] excellent world than this. But we have already established [illegible] point in the course of [illegible] treatise.

TABLE OF THE DIVINE DEGREE

Including the Most Beautiful Names as they are presented in the Holy Tradition and not in [illegible] exhaustive [illegible] restrictive [illegible]

Know, [illegible] may God grant you success, that those who are knowledge-[illegible] through God, may He be exalted, know of Him only His Existence (*wujûd*) and the fact that He is Powerful, Knowing, Speaking, Willing, Living, Abiding, Hearing and Seeing, [illegible] they recognize nothing other than His Being [illegible] such [that is to say, in the broad sense]. Now, it is [illegible] possible to apply to God, Glory to Him, what is applied to temporal realities by [illegible] of the attributes which He possesses, the existence of which is intelligible, yet ineffable. For this reason, it cannot be said of God, Glory to Him, what He is (*mâ huwa*), since He is not subject to quiddity, nor how He is, since He is not subject to qualification. In reality, the knowledge the knowers may have of Him is only by intimation with regard to existence (*wujûd*).

If you deepen your reflection [illegible] obtain the vision made possible by God through unveiling and elucidation, then from the point of view of the consciousness of the Divine Unicity as in the formula *La Ilâha Ill' Allâh* ('No God adored but God'), we would say that here there is knowledge of God. On the other hand, in respect of reality, such as that of the knowledge which we have of substance, being indivisible, spacial-[illegible] [illegible] subject to accidents – [illegible] would say, 'We have no knowledge of Him.'

Consequently, meditation [illegible] God is [illegible] possible, for mind can-[illegible] grasp any reality relating to Him. Meditation upon His Essence is fraught with [illegible] danger of anthropomorphism. God is not appre-[illegible] or delimitable, as He is not definable [illegible] qualifiable. For meditation there are only His Acts and His creatures, [illegible] well [illegible] His Excellent Names by which He has named Himself, leading to Him, recorded in [illegible] Precious Book [illegible] expressed by His Truthful Prophet.

Certain Names refer to [illegible] Essence, but [illegible] also designate, [illegible] the

Names of the Essence	Names of the Attributes		Names of the Acts
God (*Allâh*) Lord (*Rabb*) Sovereign (*Malik*)	LIFE	Living (*Hayy*)	Innovator (*Mubdi'*) Manager (*Wakîl*)
Holy (*Quddûs*) [redacted] (*Salâm*)	SPEECH	Most Thanked (*Shakûr*)	Reviver (*Bâ'ith*) Responder (*Mujîb*)
Faithful (*Mu'min*) Guardian (*Muhaymin*)	POWER	Conqueror (*Qahhâr*) Overwhelming (*Qâhir*) Potent (*Muqtadir*) Strong (*Qawiyy*) Omnipotent (*Qâdir*)	[redacted] (*Wâsi'*) Reckoner (*Hasîb*)
Mighty (*'Azîz*) Compeller (*Jabbâr*)			Sustainer (*Muqît*) Preserver (*Hafîz*)
[redacted] (*Mutakabbir*) [redacted] (*'Aliyy*)			Creator (*Khâliq*) Producer (*Bâri'*) Former (*Musawwir*)
Tremendous (*'Azîm*) Manifest (*Zâhir*)	WILL	Compassionate (*Rahmân*) Merciful (*Rahîm*) Generous (*Karîm*) Forgiver (*Ghaffâr*) Forgiving (*Ghafûr*) Loving (*Wadûd*) Clement (*Ra'ûf*) Forbearing (*Halîm*) Benevolent (*Barr*) Patient (*Sabûr*)	Nourisher (*Razzâq*) Donor (*Wahhâb*) Conqueror (*Fattâh*)
Hidden (*Bâtin*) Great (*Kabîr*)			
Magnificent (*Jalîl*) Glorious (*Majîd*)			Restricter (*Qâbid*) Expander (*Bâsit*)
Real (*Haqq*) Constant (*Matîn*)			
Unique (*Wâhid*) Glorifier (*Mâjid*)			
Eternal Resource (*Samad*)			Abaser (*Khâfid*) Elevator (*Râfi'*)
First (*Awwal*) Last (*Âkhir*)	KNOWLEDGE	Knowing (*'Alîm*) Informed (*Khabîr*) Calculator (*Muhsî*) Wise (*Hakîm*) Witness (*Shahîd*)	Endearer (*Mu'tiz*) [redacted] (*Mudhill*)
Transcendent (*Muta'âlî*)			
Independent (*Ghaniyy*)			Arbiter (*Hakam*) Just (*'Adl*) [redacted] (*Latîf*)
Light (*Nûr*) Bequeather (*Wârith*) Majestic (*Dhu-l Jalâl*) Vigilant (*Raqîb*)	HEARING	Hearer (*Sami'*)	Reintegrator (*Mu'îd*) Vivifier (*Muhyî*) Killer (*Mumît*)
	SEEING	Seer (*Basîr*)	[redacted] friend (*Waliyy*) Indulgent (*Tawwâb*) Vindicator (*Muntaqim*) Fair (*Muqsit*) All-Embracing (*Jâmi'*) Enricher (*Mughnî*) Preventer (*Mâni'*) [redacted] (*Dârr*) [redacted] (*Nâfi'*) [redacted] (*Hâdî*) Inventor (*Badî'*) Discriminator (*Rashîd*)

[redacted] time, His Qualities or His Acts, and [redacted] both simultaneously. However, their reference to His [redacted] is [redacted] explicit.

On this table[30] of the Divine Names, [redacted] have brought into the category of Names of the Essence those in this situation even though, as [redacted] have just mentioned, they may also designate certain Attributes or Acts, or both. We have proceeded in the same way with the [redacted] of Attributes and Acts, [classifying] them according to their immediate meaning. That does [redacted] prevent their inclusion in another column. For example, the name 'Lord' (*Rabb*), meaning 'The Unchanging' (*thâbit*) [redacted] of the Essence; but when [redacted] means 'He Who rectifies' (*muslih*), [redacted] relates [redacted] the Names of Acts; and when it [redacted] 'The Possessor' (*mâlik*), it [redacted] the category of the Names of Attribution.

Know that [redacted] did [redacted] intend [redacted] limit the Divine Names [redacted] those appearing in the table, or to insinuate [redacted] there exist no others, but [redacted] have arranged them there to draw attention [redacted] what [redacted] going to mention, if God wills.

When you [redacted] one of the Excellent Names of God, apply it to the most obvious category, and place it in the corresponding column of the table, for there is [redacted] considerable number of Names by [redacted] of the diversity of meanings which they [redacted] able to [redacted] We have [redacted] up this list only to [redacted] [redacted] door for you [redacted] what you consider good with regard [redacted] the Names. The table which [redacted] have established will [redacted] useful to the servant who desires to be characterized by the Names [redacted] the point where they become for him realities by which he is progressively designated and qualified. For God has said: 'Surely, you are of [redacted] eminent character' (Qur'an LXVIII, 4). Furthermore, God has described for us the characteristics of the Prophet: 'Towards the Faithful, you [i.e. the Prophet] are benevolent and merciful' (Qur'an IX, 128).

When you are well aware of [redacted] aim in this table, you will recognize someone who is characterized by these Names and discern in [redacted] person [redacted] [redacted] given time [redacted] Name which you [redacted] able to atttribute to [redacted] of these Names [redacted] divine degrees [redacted] [redacted] moment. You will then say that that individual is presently in the degree of Acts, if the Name involved is in that category, or again in the domain of such and such [redacted] Attribute, or in that of the Essence, [redacted] you wish, according to what results from the economy of the Name. If the [redacted] carries meanings shared by all three degrees, consider the predominant meaning and qualify the person by it, applying the degree [redacted] him in respect of his [redacted] (*hâl*); [redacted] if he be higher in respect of station (*maqâm*),[31] nonetheless determine his degree on the basis of his state. However, for [redacted] more accomplished among us, that person's true condition will not remain hidden if he be in [redacted] higher [redacted] Whether [redacted] individual occupies that Name according to what the

moment conveys, or whether he [redacted] and dominate [redacted] Name, will not escape us. The perfect among us will distinguish well between these two categories. But [redacted] who does [redacted] possess this aptitude will judge in respect of the individual according [redacted] [redacted] (*hâl*) in relation [redacted] the Name. [redacted] [redacted] know no [redacted] That is the [redacted] of the table.

We have begun this Table with [God] amongst beings, since [redacted] is the First without firstness, whilst all the entities [redacted] still pure privation. For this reason we have presented this table after that of Primordial Matter and together with it, since the latter [redacted] be dissociated from God in Eternity, without, however, supposing that Primordial Matter has any existence in itself, but it is known by Him, Glory [redacted] Him. He knows it by its realities and by them alone, since Primordial Matter embraces the Totality. God is for [redacted] eternally outward, as it is for Him inwardly, since it is [redacted] attribute of knowledge and there is no knowledge except through it. On the other hand, Primordial Matter is [redacted] knowledge (*'ilm*), for Knowledge of Primordial Matter requires knowability, and Primordial Matter does not fall within the range of knowledge (*'ilm*). It is however manifested in this category through reality. For this reason, we have established the existence of God in correspondence with most of the levels of existence in the table.

We have arranged [the table] according to the Names, for actions rely upon them and, since it is impossible to give [redacted] form to Essence in [redacted] mind, it is indispensable to supply the mind with [redacted] mental 'support'. Such [redacted] be the office of the Names and consequently [redacted] must invoke them. The table is concerned exclusively with the category of substance implied in Primordial Matter, insofar as Substance refers to the Substratum (*asl*). Now, the Foundation of all of the entities is the Existence of God, for were it not for the Existence of that Divine Foundation and the intelligibility of Primordial, Hylic Matter, the adventitious consequence could [redacted] come into existence after non-existence.

[redacted] that [redacted] been well understood, realize it and you will be well guided, if God wills. Of Him help is asked.

CAUSE OF THE GENESIS OF THE WORLD

Know – and may God grant you prosperity and success – that when [redacted] contemplate [redacted] world in itself and apprehend its reality, source [redacted] origin, and when [redacted] discern therein the divine degree, after thorough analysis, [redacted] become aware that the Divine Essence transcends all relationship [redacted] [redacted] dependence [redacted] any entity whatever in the world of generation, creation and command. For reality rejects that.

We have meditated upon the [redacted] of sovereignty which [redacted] its

influence in this world, and we have found the Excellent Names which show in the world, from full and faultless evidence. They appear in it by their signs and statutes, not, emphasize, by their essence, but by their analogue, by their reality, but by their sensible forms. Thus preserve inaccessibility of the Essence in Its Transcendence and Purity.

Having considered the Names, have found them to be many, and have told ourselves that this multiplicity constituted a totalization. The prototypes the Rulers of the worlds and of the Names, since the prototypes embrace the reality of the Names.

The primordial and all-embracing prototype named 'Allah' which includes the meanings of the Names and designates the Essence. And maintain Its transcendence we have maintained the transcendence of the Itself. Furthermore, in respect of Its embracing the Names, if take It as having relationship with any of the created beings, are treating It in the just mentioned [as embracing all the Names], but are only treating from the standpoint of of Its realities over which It (He) has complete supervision. That reality has its own self-designating (which is) other than the Name Allah Itself. So let us treat it from the point of view of that (specific) Name, borne by no other, and us bring forth into the light its created nature, that leave His Name Allah in Its station of sanctification.

Once this is accepted, and the All-embracing Name is removed from creaturial and remains at Its own degree, so that every reality shown [as it really is], then the sovereignty of His Essence manifests totally.

Let return the prototypes which the totality of His Realities. We shall say that the prototypes of the Names, as much in respect of speculation of Religious Tradition, are seven in number, neither more nor less, while the other Names are derivatives. Those Living, the Knowing, the Willer, the Speaker, the Powerful, the Generous and the Apportioner.[32]

The Living is first of the prototypes, while the Apportioner is the last.

The Speaker is especially included, by religious tradition [in the list], where it occupies this rank in a satisfying

The other Names are selected prototypes by the intelligent spirit.

The Name 'the Speaker' is very particularly reserved for the Holy Spirit, also has, in certain respect, privileged relationship with Name 'the Apportioner', well as with the Generous.

As for the Name 'the Generous', it embraces every name of clemency which confers felicity benefit. the Guardian Names of aspect.

As for the Name 'the Apportioner', it applies to every Name of rigour

which confers prejudice vengeance. It is the Guardian the of aspect.

In this world, there exist no other prototypes, other relations those two dimensions with regard to the Names.

Were it not for the presence of religious precepts, would not strictly have required the Name 'the Apportioner'. But punishment and threat oblige resort to the prototypes of this Name. The sufferings of beasts and such like do not fall under the stroke of Name, relate rather the 'the Willer', which belongs to the first prototypes.

well upon the diagram have drawn for you, and fix it in your imagination!

THE DIAGRAM OF THE CIRCLE OF THE WORLD

Here I have outlined for you circle of the world, without consideration of a religious law, and the prototype which predominate.

I have drawn the circle of bliss which can of the world, and circle of adversity, and the prototype Names which predominate there. Consider the extension of the rays from the prototype presences to the world, and the degrees of the prototypes, by order of succession superiority.

I have drawn the two aspects [of clemency and rigour] with respect the Names, between the circles of the world and the prototype presences.

I have drawn for that three circles, one comprising the two aspects in question corresponding to the circle of the absolute macrocosm, and two circles corresponding to the worlds of bliss and adversity distinguishing the two aspects [of clemency rigour].

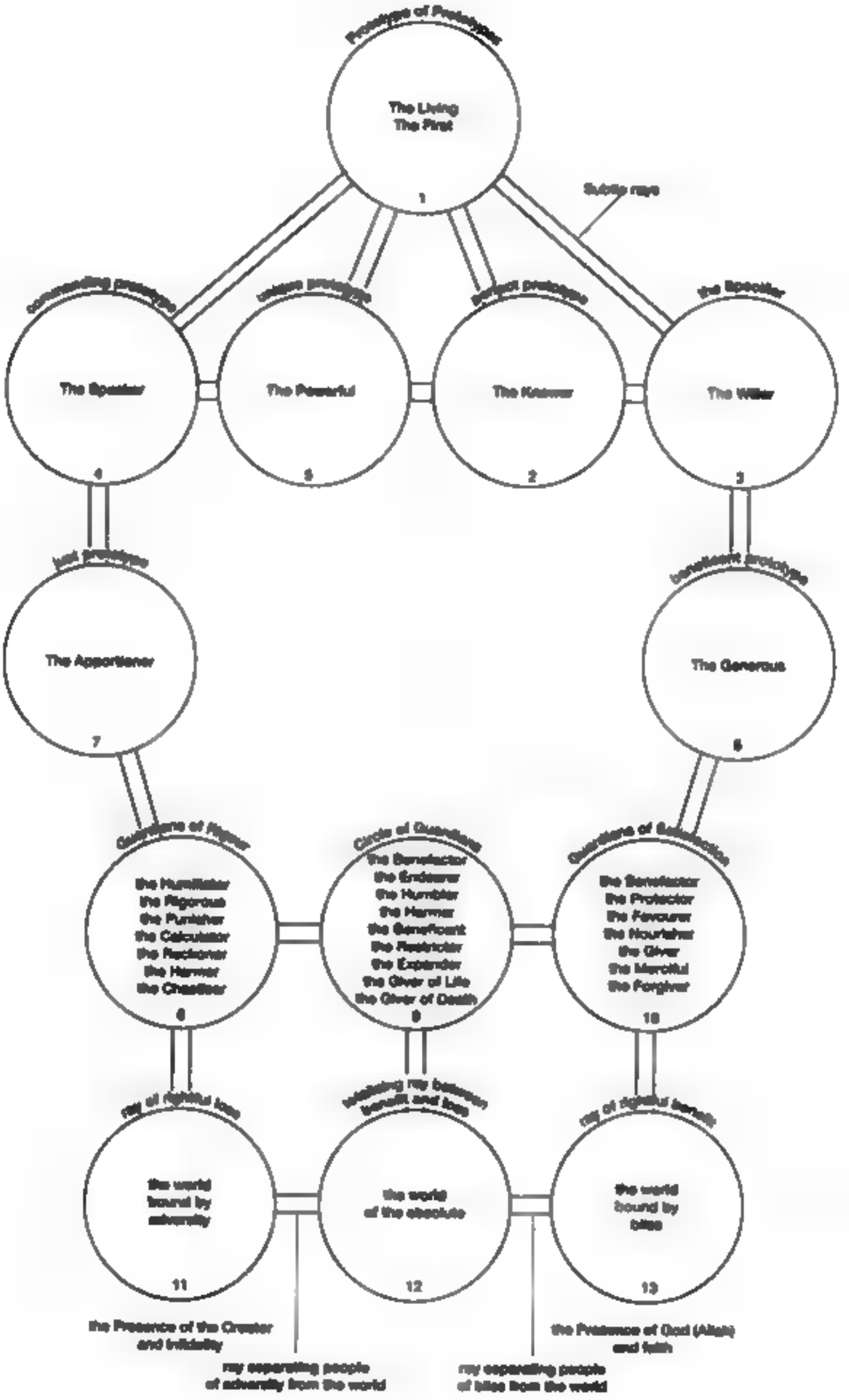
Meditate upon this diagram, explore it until grasp in your imagination.

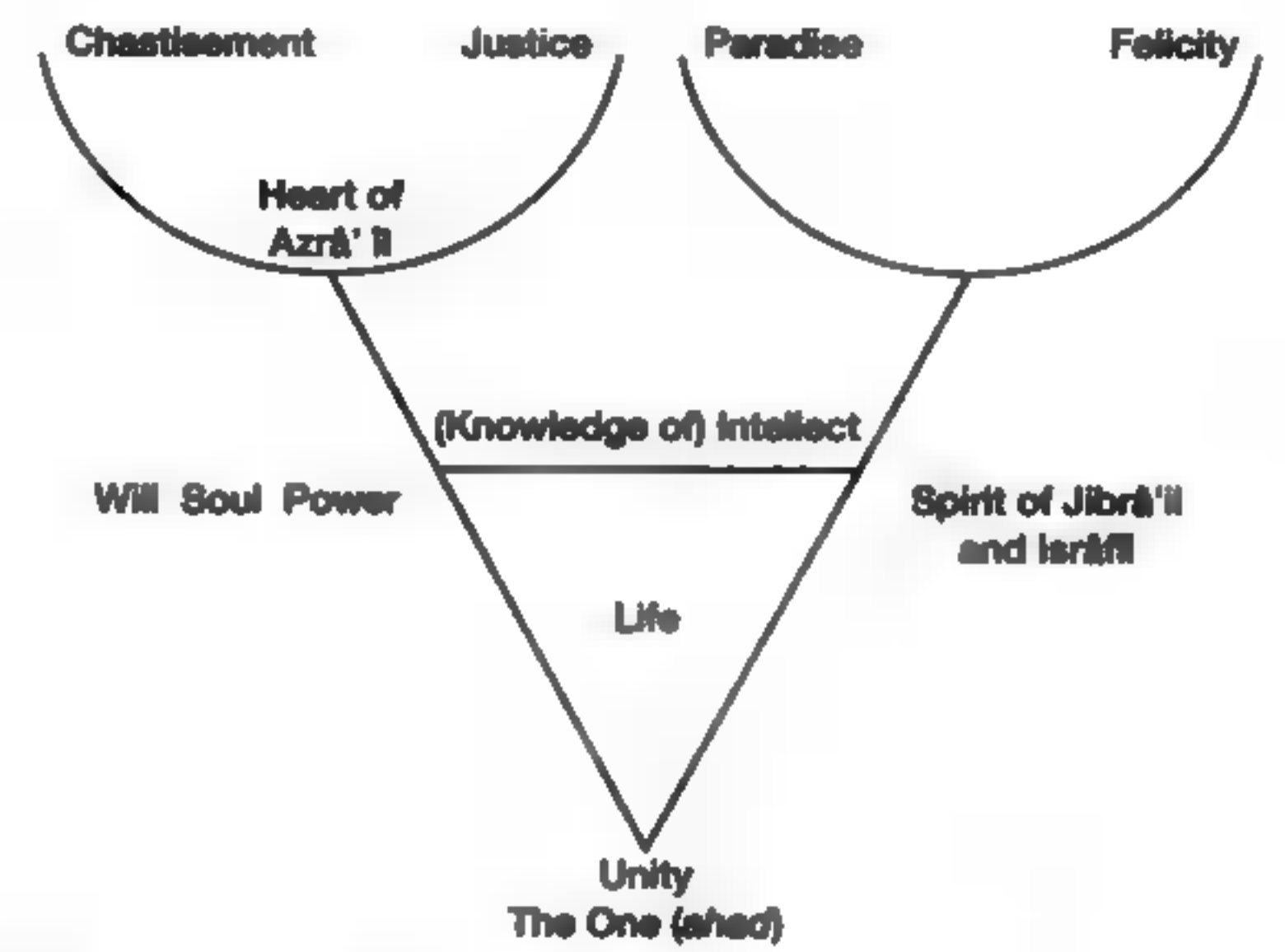
I have traced the rays from the prototypes the guardians of the and from the guardians to the [three] worlds [mentioned above].

It is possible a ray continues from one prototype to another of the order. Then, the ray does in fact reach the circle of the world, by of enfolding of certain prototypes within others.

Inscribe on the rays their effects in order to discriminate well. Apply your attention and refine your spirit, then thank God, Who has laid this task upon for your sake, for you know of the existence of what is hidden to most men, by tangible experience and a suitable analogy; this, to the favour, strength, power kindness of God.

Here then is the of the above-mentioned diagram.[33]


The Living
The First
1
Subtle rays
The Speaker
4
The Powerful
5
The Knower
2
The Willer
3
The Appointer
7
The Generous
6
the Humiliator
the Rigorous
the Punisher
the Calculator
the Reckoner
the Harmer
the Chastiser
8
the Benefactor
the Endearer
the Humbler
the Harmer
the Beneficent
the Restrictor
the Expander
the Giver of Life
the Giver of Death
9
the Benefactor
the Protector
the Favourer
the Nourisher
the Giver
the Merciful
the Forgiver
10
the world
bound by
adversity
11
the world
of the absolute
12
the world
bound by
bliss
13
the Presence of the Creator
and infidelity
the Presence of God (Allah)
and faith
my separating people
of adversity from the world
my separating people
of bliss from the world



Know that ■ the treatise entitled *'Anqâ' Mughrib*, in the chapter 'Discourse on the Eternity of the World',[34] ■■ dealt with the ■■■■ of the creation of the world, according to ■■ allegorical exposition and a divine treatment. I shall ■■■ mention what is appropriate in the present context.

Chapter VI

When the Guardians of the Names were entrusted with the Keys of ■■ Heavens and Earth, there ■■■ as yet neither Heaven nor Earth, ■■ each Guardian holding ■ key remained unable to find what ■■ open. Thereupon they exclaimed: 'Strange! Here ■■■ ■■■■■■■ with the keys of treasures, but the ■■■■■■■ ■■■ ■■ to ■■ found! ■■■■ shall we do with the keys?' They then agreed and said: 'We must address ourselves to the seven Prototypes who have handed the keys to us, without informing ■■ of the ■■■■■■■ whose guardians ■■■ are!' They then went ■■ the gates of the Prototypes; at the gate of the Prototype 'the Specifier' (*al-imâm al-mukhassis*), of the Prototype 'the Benefactor' and of the Prototype 'the Apportioner'. They informed them then of the situation, and the Prototypes replied: 'You have faithfully repeated this news to us, ■■■■ ■■■ shall clarify it for you, if God wills, may He be exalted. But let us ■■■ to the remaining Prototype and assemble ■■ the gate of the presence

of [redacted] Divine Prototype, the Prototype of Prototypes.'

All the Prototypes assembled, those who are Guardians by relation [redacted] the Prototype known by [redacted] [name] Allah. They all stood [redacted] His gate and He [redacted] out towards them, saying: 'What is the matter?' They informed Him of the situation, that they [redacted] seeking where the Heavens and the Earth [redacted] to be found, in order to place one key to each gate. In reply He demanded: 'Where is [redacted] Prototype "the Specifier"?' The Willer then hurried to Him and [redacted] asked: 'Do you [redacted] possess [redacted] information, [redacted] [redacted] the Knower?' [redacted] replied, 'Yes'. He then said: 'If it is so, relieve Them of their dismay and worry!' The Knower [redacted] the Willer said: 'O Supreme Prototype, [redacted] the Prototype "the Powerful" [redacted] "the Speaker" [redacted] help Us, for We [redacted] accomplish it unless there are four of us!'

God called the Powerful and the Speaker and said to them: 'Help your fellows in their task!' Both replied: 'Most certainly!' And they entered then into the degree of the Generous, saying to him: 'We are resolved [redacted] existentiate the beings and the world of temporality, and to make them pass from privation (*'adam*) [redacted] existence (*wujûd*). Now, that is [redacted] [redacted] for your degree, the degree of Generosity. Give us the Generosity to allow them [redacted] be unfurled!' He granted them the unconditioned Generosity and they [redacted] His presence with it [redacted] adjoin it to the world, and spread it forth in the [redacted] completed mode, beyond which no higher modality exists, for the world proceeds from unconditioned Generosity. Indeed, if [redacted] world were found superior to it, that would imply that Generosity had shown Itself miserly by withholding, keeping certain perfections [redacted] Itself. It would [redacted] incorrect to call Him 'Generous' when He possesses some miserliness. Indeed, 'Generous' [redacted] no more suited to Him in respect of what He granted than 'Miser' in view of what He withheld. The realities would consequently be disrupted. [redacted] is then established that it is absurd to apply to Him the name of miserly, just as it is also absurd to suppose that [redacted] has kept to Himself what is a more [redacted] [world].

[redacted] then is the origin and [redacted] of the creation of the world.

The Prototype 'the Apportioner' appeared only after the Revelation of religious prescriptions, and the Names then took up each its key, [redacted] were able to discover the reality of what the key [redacted] in containment, and also the rank which the Names held [redacted] the existence of beings.

Realize well [redacted] content of this concise [redacted] marvellous chapter, for it [redacted] be of benefit [redacted] you in this matter!

It is God Who guides [redacted] rectitude.

Here ends [redacted] treatise.

NOTES

1. See O. Yahia, *Histoire [illegible] Classification de l'oeuvre d'Ibn 'Arabi*, Damascus, 1964, vol. I, pp. 311–13, n.289.
2. *Al-Futûhât al-makkiyya*, Cairo, 1293H, I, p. 126; Cairo, 1329H, I, p. 98; [illegible] O. Yahia, Cairo, 1972, II, p. 119. [illegible] also 1329H, p. 120 and Yahia, II, p. 230.
3. Claude Addas, *Ibn 'Arabi [illegible] la quête du Soufre Rouge*, Paris, 1989, p. 161.
4. See R.W. Austin, *Sufis of Andalusia*, London, 1971, pp. 158–9.
5. *Futûhât*, 1293H, I, p. 12; 1329H, I, p. 10; ed. Yahia, I, p. 72.
6. H.S. Nyberg, *Kleinere Schriften des Ibn al-'Arabi, nach Handschriften [illegible] Upsala und [illegible] zum [illegible] Mal herausgegeben und mit Einleitung und Kom-[illegible] versehen*, Leiden, 1919, Arabic text 1–38.
7. According to the *hadîth*, 'God created [illegible] in [illegible] (his) image (*'ala suratihi*)', in Ibn Hanbal, *Musnad*, II, 315, 323; Bukhari, I [illegible] VIII, 61. Cf. Ibn 'Arabi, *Traité de L'Amour*, Paris 1986, p. 56; and H. Corbin, *Creative Imagination [illegible] the Sufism of Ibn 'Arabi*, Chapter [illegible] the Form of God.
8. This refers to one of the ten characteristics of the Prophet Muhammad. He cast no shadow because he [illegible] luminous. Cf. Muhammad al-Mounawi, *Mahomet Mystique*, Paris, 1978, p. 53.
9. On this personality, [illegible] our Introduction.
10. Cf. Qur'an II, 34: 'And when We said [illegible] [illegible] Angels, "Prostrate yourselves before Adam!", they then prostrated themselves except Iblis. He was a rebel, and proud, and [illegible] of the number of the unbelievers.'
11. The notion of intercession by Angels and Prophets is found in the [illegible] recorded in the collection of Ahmad Ibn Hanbal, [illegible] III, p. 94, and reported by Abu Sa'id. In this long *hadîth*, there is also the matter of the intercession on behalf of believers. See also Bukhari, *Sahîh* 4, *Tawhîd*, 24.
12. 'God created Man as [illegible] epitome of all the subtle rays of the Universe. From [illegible] proceeds [illegible] subtle ray towards every thing in the Universe. This ray transmits to Man that which God deposited in that thing for [illegible] Through the intermediary of this ray, the gnostic moves that thing towards his purpose. Every thing in the Universe exerts [illegible] influence [illegible] Man, as [illegible] exerts [illegible] influence [illegible] it.' *Fûtûhat*, 1329H, I, p. 157; ed. O. Yahia, II, p. 386.
13. Ref. Qur'an XX, 5: 'The All-Merciful on the Throne [illegible] [illegible] Undifferentiated Assize.'
14. The terms *wujûd*, *'adam*, *mawjûd*, *ma'dûm*, [illegible] by [illegible] 'Arabi throughout [illegible] first part of the treatise, are given in [illegible] Aristotelian perspective which is far from being in harmony with the Shaykh's leading doctrine.
15. This speculation of Aristotelian origin (cf. *De Interpr*. I, 2), referred to in the *Futûhât*, 1269H, I, p. 49; 1329H, I, pp. 45–6; ed. O. Yahia, I, p. 208, [illegible] [illegible] monplace in the writings of the Arab philosophers. Cf. Ibn Sina, *Najât* (Cairo 1331), pp. 15–16. See also P. Kraus, *Jâbir ibn Hayyân*, II, Cairo, 1942, p. 259. Ibn 'Arabi again harps back to this theme, quoting the *Insha'* in his *Kitâb al-Azal*, in *Rasâ'il Ibn 'Arabi*, Hydrabad, 1361, I, p. 9.
16. On [illegible] vision of the [illegible] of God in Heaven, cf. Qur'an LVVX, 22 and 23, and Bukhari, I, 145 and IX, 156.

17. Implied reference to Avicenna and [illegible] demonstration of existence [illegible] an attribute. Cf. Toshihiko Izutsu; *Unicité [illegible] l'existence et creation perpetuelle en mystique Islamique*, Paris, 1980, pp. 10 [illegible] *seq*.
18. Ibn 'Arabi here makes the distinction between [illegible] Will (*mashî'a*), which none may contravene, [illegible] Normative Will (*irâda*) which the being subject to Divine Order [illegible] always disobey. Cf. Ibn 'Arabi, *Fusûs al-hikâm* ('The [illegible] of Wisdom') [illegible] R.W.J. Austin, London, 1980, Ch.XI, p. 141.

    Note that Verse 68 of *Sûrah* XXVIII may be otherwise translated if we give to the verb *yakhtâru* the meaning of 'choose the best', [illegible] [illegible] the particle *mâ*, not the value of a negative adverb, [illegible] [illegible] of [illegible] indeterminate relative pronoun, 'that which'. The verse will then [illegible] in this way: 'And your Lord [illegible] what He wishes and chooses what is good (or best) for them' (*mâ* [illegible] [illegible] *al-khiyaratu*). This perfectly legitimate way of reading the verse allows [illegible] better to follow the doctrinal unfolding of the [illegible]
19. Nyberg suggests [illegible] alternative reading: 'whose [illegible] [illegible] irreversible'.
20. Lit. analogy (*tashbîh*) [illegible] similitude (*tamthîl*).
21. Cf. A. Altmann, 'The Delphic Maxim in Mediaeval Judaism and Islam' in *Studies [illegible] Religious Philosophy and Mysticism*, London, 1969 pp. 1–40.
22. Ibn 'Arabi also uses [illegible] allegory in the *Futûhât*, 1329H, I, p. 119; Yahia, II, pp. 224–5.
23. They are luminous, not igneous, by nature.
24. This term [illegible] [illegible] 'establish'.
25. This [illegible] category is not cited by Ibn 'Arabi.
26. Ibn 'Arabi here refers to the ten categories of Aristotelian logic. These were taken up by the earliest Muslim philosophers [illegible] particularly by Ibn Sina.
27. Abu Jahl, paternal uncle of the Prophet, remained [illegible] implacable and cruel [illegible] of Islam at the time of its inception. [illegible] was killed [illegible] the famous battle of Badr. Ibn 'Arabi here sets [illegible] a certain equivalence of Abu Jahl's [illegible] with that of Pharaoh, who [illegible] the most obstinate, if [illegible] the cruellest, adversary of Moses.
28. These qualifications are found in numerous places in the Qur'an.
29. See preceding note.
30. The table does [illegible] contain all of the ninety-nine Divine Names accepted by tradition. Cf. Fakhr ad-Dîn ar-Râzî, *Traité sur les Noms divins*, translated by M. Gloton, Paris, [illegible]
31. For the distinction between [illegible] (spiritual [illegible] attained Providentially) and *maqâm* (spiritual [illegible] obtained by personal effort), [illegible] M. Valsan, 'Sur la notion de *hâl*', *Études traditionnelles*, 1962, pp. 173–80 (translation of [illegible] chapters 192–93).
32. [illegible] 'Arabi does not here draw on the classic division of Divine Attributes of Essence. The last two, the Generous and the Apportioner are normally the Hearing and Seeing.
33. Not all the manuscripts give [illegible] [illegible] figure. We have therefore produced two diagrams, which can also be compared to the figures provided by Ibn 'Arabi in the *Futûhât* 1329H, Vol. III, [illegible] 420–29.
34. Cairo 1373/1954, pp. 33–41, where another allegory concerning [illegible] Divine Names is [illegible] be found. The same theme, referring moreover to the present works, [illegible] developed in [illegible] chapter of the *Futûhât*, 1329H, I, [illegible] 98–101; Yahia, II, [illegible] 119–31.

Excerpts from the Epistle on the Spirit of Holiness (*Risâlah Rûh al-Quds*)

ROGER BOASE AND FARID SAHNOUN

To [redacted] memory of my [redacted] 'Abdallah Michael Scott, an admirer of Shaykh Ibn 'Arabi.

R.B.

INTRODUCTION

Ibn 'Arabi composed [redacted] *Rûh al-Quds* in [redacted] in the year 600AH/1203–4CE. It is written [redacted] the form of an epistle to [redacted] old friend Abu Muhammad al-Qurashi al-Mahdawi who lived in Tunis; but much of it is also expressed in the form of a dialogue with [redacted] soul.

[redacted] is possible to discern five main sections in the work. The first discusses the degeneration of Sufism among the author's contemporaries, especially in Egypt and Arabia. The second is a brief account of a spiritual crisis in the author's life. The third is concerned with certain exemplary figures in the early days of Islam: Abu Bakr, 'Umar and Uways al-Qarani, whom Ibn 'Arabi regards as a model of spiritual perfection. The fourth – by far the longest – deals with the lives and teachings of fifty-five Sufis whom Ibn 'Arabi had met and from whom he had obtained guidance. The fifth, which is a kind of epilogue, considers some of the obstacles which the soul will encounter on the spiritual path; it includes [redacted] long *hadîth* (or Prophetic saying) addressed to Usamah ibn Zayd, and [redacted] poem of confession and remorse. The general tone of the work is personal and intimate, and the central unifying theme is the need for friendship, which requires both sincere criticism and self-criticism; one should speak to one's friend as [redacted] would to one's own self.[1]

It [redacted] generally acknowledged that no other document contains such [redacted] wealth of information about Ibn 'Arabi and his spiritual milieu. Dr R.W.J. Austin had the excellent idea of extracting [redacted] biographies of Ibn 'Arabi's saintly contemporaries and combining them with further biographical material from Ibn 'Arabi's *al-Durrat al-Fakhirah* ('The Precious Pearl'), a synopsis of a much larger work no longer extant, [redacted] posed from memory for a friend in Damascus after 620/1223.

This translation, comprising seventy-one biographical sketches, is entitled *Sufis of Andalusia* (Allen [redacted] Unwin, London; 1971). The [redacted] section of the *Risâlah* and certain other [redacted] [redacted] translated into Spanish by Miguel Asín Palacios;[2] but, [redacted] far [redacted] I [redacted] aware, [redacted] work [redacted] [redacted] been translated [redacted] of Arabic in its entirety. Therefore, when

Farid Sahnoun, of fourth-year monograph students the University of Fez (Université Abdellah), told that he had found an edition of the *Risâlah al-Quds* (Cairo, 1280AH/1902CE) in Qarawiyyin Library and proposed doing some translation work, I suggested that he should translate into English those parts which had never been translated before. His translation, with introduction commentary, submitted to English Department in 1981 as part of the *Licence* Course.

Using the edition of Mahmoud al-Ghorab (Damascus, 1964), I have re-translated the selected passages, adding some explanatory notes. I have also translated some lines from the concluding section which had been omitted. Another former pupil of mine, Abdel-Ila Bennis, now First Secretary the Moroccan Embassy, suggested few improvements. However, the person to whom I am indebted is my friend the distinguished scholar Dr Abdallah al-Tayyib, formerly Professor of Arabic the University of Khartoum, and its Vice-Chancellor, and also colleague of mine Fez, who took the trouble to detect many and clarify many obscure points. I am also grateful to Assadullah Yate, a British Muslim and postgraduate working on Ibn Rushd, for taking the trouble send photocopy of the Ibn 'Arabi text from Cambridge.

These which include both the beginning and end of the work, have been divided into six sections: Friendship and Advice; Sufism in the East and the Maghrib; Ibn 'Arabi Examines His Own Soul; The Example of Uways; The Path to Paradise; and The Soul's Remorse. Perhaps, the most interesting is the section on Uways al-Qarani, contemporary of the Prophet Muhammad who lived in Yemen, but was in close spiritual contact with the Prophet. He could become one of the Prophet's companions because looked after his mother and she would not grant him permission to leave her in her old age. He earned his living poor camelherd. As Annemarie Schimmel says, he became 'the prototype of the inspired Sufi who been guided solely by divine grace.'[3]

EPISTLE ON THE SPIRIT OF HOLINESS

In the of Allah, the Merciful, the Compassionate, in Whom there is power and strength, and may Allah bless grant salvation to Muhammad and his kinsfolk.

From God's weak servant, from one who is solicitous affectionate, from appointed to give sincere advice to his fellow brethren, and strongly urged to do by his contemporaries: Muhammad ibn 'Ali ibn Muhammad ibn 'Arabi al-Ta'yy al-Hatimi, God give him success.

To the Friend of Allah, to his brother the dependable Cornerstone, Abu Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz ibn Abi [illegible] al-Qurashi al-Mahdawi,[4] resident of Tunis (may God protect him).

Friendship and advice

O [illegible] brother, sincere advice is the [illegible] thing that two friends or companions can exchange, especially nowadays when friendship thrives [illegible] flattery. There is evidence that the Prophet Muhammad (God's blessings be upon him) said: 'The truth left 'Umar no friend.'[5] Uways al-Qarani (may God be pleased with him) said to a man from Murad: 'O brother of Murad, death and the remembrance of it leave the believer no happiness; knowledge of the rights of Almighty God will spare in his wealth neither silver nor gold; and his upholding of the truth will leave him [illegible] friend.'[6]

All men accept advice from others, but not from the self (*nafs*),[7] except in the [illegible] of the one who is well-guided by God. Such [illegible] person enjoys hearing about the defects of the self, above all, my dear brother, when you divulge them in your public discourses in [illegible] general way, without reference to your self, [illegible] that it [illegible] that this is true, and so that when you say to your self, 'By this, I [illegible] you' (since the believer is the mirror of his brother, and I have [illegible] in you what makes it necessary for me to say something about it to you), the self will feel proud and will say: 'Glory be to God, I am only your mirror, and you [illegible] your self in me, and is [illegible] to one like me that such [illegible] affront should be made?' For the self is blind when it [illegible] [illegible] seeing its own defects, whereas it is [illegible] watchful of the defects of others. Thus your advice to the self prompted by [illegible] question may lead her to commit many prohibited things such as lies and hypocrisy. It is so rare nowadays for [illegible] adviser [illegible] find [illegible] true friend, and concerning this I composed this verse:

> **When I committed myself to research and enquiry,**
> **They left [illegible] without a friend in the world.**

I swear by the Eternal God that I [illegible] spoke [illegible] lie, and [I swear] that I only said what I had discovered.

Know, my friend (may God protect you), that I [illegible] associated with you, during my stay with you, except [illegible] the basis of sincerity. One day, you told me frankly, while having supper, that I [illegible] been [illegible] critical, and you supported this remark with reference to Ibrahim ibn Adham,[8] [who recited]:

> **The contented eye does not perceive any defect,**
> **Whereas the discontented [illegible] exposes failings.**

As I explained, this verse expresses the attitude of one who loves you for the sake of his own self, whereas the person who loves you for your own [redacted] would [redacted] speak in this manner. Since God's love for us is for our own sake, not for His sake, He draws attention [redacted] our imperfections and exposes our shortcomings. God also directs us to noble manners and noble deeds, and shows us the way to them. And since we love Him for ourselves, for indeed we have been unable to love Him for Himself, we should accept what proceeds from Him, even though it may conflict with [redacted] desires and inclinations.

O my brother, you have recently gained [redacted] qualities which I have [redacted] seen in anyone apart from you (may God appoint you and [redacted] among the winners). One of these is that you appreciate the importance of knowledge and scholars, and you [redacted] no heed to miracles and spiritual [redacted] Another of [your exceptional qualities] is your willingness to be led by the truth, and your humility before it, and your readiness to dis- [redacted] to anyone who has it, whether he be [redacted] person of distinction or one who goes unnoticed. You seem utterly indifferent to your worldly rank – part of which is [redacted] consequence of people looking up to you and kissing your hand and the fact that kings [redacted] to your door. This is the height of impartiality (may God make us both abide by it). Another of your qualities is that, when you don't know something, you say 'I don't know,' and when you know something, you say 'I would like to hear it from someone else.' By God, my dear friend, you have acquired some qualities in the pursuit of which men's heads have rolled to the ground. Moreover, you have acquired [redacted] spiritual [redacted] unaffected by circumstances. Your status is not embellished by the glamour of high rank. Also I have [redacted] [redacted] the like of your intellectual curiosity with regard [redacted] men and the times, nor the like of your conviction that this is one of the religious duties encumbent upon everyone. This is really a wonder for ears to hear, for evening discourse, and for travellers [redacted] spread far and wide. And God has endowed you with such expertise and power in disputing with jurists by [redacted] of brilliant arguments in defence of vir- [redacted] and manliness based [redacted] the teachings of the Prophet.

Sufism in the East and the Maghrib

As for the people of your time, my friend, they are best described by the [redacted] Abu 'Abd Allah Muhammad ibn 'Ali al-Tirmidhi[9] (may God have mercy upon him) who said: 'Obvious weakness and vast pretence.' As [redacted] [redacted] I arrived in this land [Arabia], I asked for [redacted] people of the ideal *tarîqah* (or spiritual way), in the hope that I might find among them the [redacted] of the Heavenly Companion.[10] I [redacted] taken to [redacted] group who lived in a Sufi hospice (*khânaqah*), whose building was lofty with [redacted] wide court- yard, [redacted] I perceived their inner purpose and intended direction,

by the cleanliness of [what they call] their patched garments,[11] or rather their ostentatious uniforms. They proclaim that the people of Maghrib [North Africa and Al-Andalus] the people of *haqiqah* and not the people of *tariqah*, while they are the people of *tariqah*, not of *haqiqah*.[12] This is of absurd, since one cannot arrive at the *haqiqah* without mastering the *tariqah* (or method). Our distinguished leader and Imam Abu Sulayman al-Darani[13] (may God have mercy upon him) said: 'They have been denied attainment, that is to say (attaining) the truth, because of their neglect of basic principles, namely the *tariqah*.' Thus they have testified against themselves that they are devoid of *haqiqah*, and that is also testimony that they of any *tariqah*. And for their testimony about us the people of *haqiqah*, that is also a testimony for us that are the people of *tariqah*. They have therefore inadvertently committed two forms of ignorance.

O my friend, this present is hard, a rebellious devil, an obdurate tyrant. The evil scholars only interested in material gain, and the unjust rulers ignorant judgements, and the false Sufis clad and girded in worldliness.[14] The world has assumed such importance in their eyes that they do not perceive any higher quest; in their souls the Reality become so belittled that they flee from it. They only care about prayer-rugs, coloured patches, robes, walking sticks decorated beads, like old They like greedy children and they are indeed like little ones in their understanding. They have no knowledge to restrain them from what is illicit, nor any self-discipline. They use the superficial aspects of religion to obtain ephemeral things; they take refuge in Sufi hospices, enjoying both what is permitted and what is forbidden; they have broadened their sleeves and fattened their bodies. With regard to this, there is Prophetic saying.[15] Salim, a client of Abu Hudhayfah, reported that the Messenger of Allah said: 'On the Day of Resurrection people will be brought forward with merits like the mountains of Tahamah, but when they stand before God, will nullify their deeds and cast them into hell.' Salim then said: 'O Messenger of Allah, I am willing to sacrifice my father and my mother, but please explain to us who these people that know them, for I by the Just God who you that I am afraid to be of them.' The Prophet replied: 'O Salim, they did fast and pray [in another version, 'they took part of the night (to pray)'], but whenever they heard of anything worldly, they would leap after it, and therefore Almighty God nullified their deeds.' ibn Dinar[16] said: 'This indeed refers hypocrisy.' Then al-Ma'alah al-Ziyad held him by the beard said: 'Abu'l-Khayr, you speak the truth.'

My friend, if you could only see how they perform their hasty prayers in crooked lines. Between each and his comrade there is room for thousand demons. And if you step forward close that you

should [illegible] how they frown! If, by mistake, you [illegible] foot on someone's prayer-rug, [illegible] will give you [illegible] punch, without caring where the blow [illegible] land; [illegible] could even be fatal. Such is the spiritual path that the people of your time are following! May God have mercy on Abu'l-Qasim al-Qushayri[17] who [illegible] those who [illegible] adorned with the Sufi appearance but who, in their inner selves, [illegible] naked by comparison with them. About them he recited this [illegible]

> [illegible] for [illegible] tents, they resemble their tents,
> But the [illegible] of the clan are [illegible] the women of these tents.[18]

This is about those who appeared alike. [illegible] nowadays [illegible] is generally agreed [by Sufis] that neither the tents nor the women exist any more.

The Sufis (may God [illegible] pleased with them) used [illegible] [illegible] patched garments. This [illegible] their emblem and this was the green death.[19] These people [pseudo-Sufis] of today say: 'We should [illegible] special patched clothes.' They do [illegible] understand what is [illegible] by wearing such clothes. They have refined the cast-off clothes and tailored them with certain shapes and designs which are very expensive, and they have wasted a great deal of cloth. They then call them patched garments. May God be pleased with Abu'l-Qasim al-Junayd[20] who recited this verse when he [illegible] this corruption:

> Sufi people have departed.
> Sufism has become [illegible] swindle.
> Sufism [illegible] become [illegible] leather water-bag.
> A mark on the forehead and a staff.
> Sufism has become an exclamation,
> A show of hysteria, [illegible] folding prayer-mat
> The whims of your [illegible] have deceived you:
> These [illegible] not the rules of the Path.

By God [I swear] the people of the Path [illegible] [illegible] like this. The [illegible] Path was only achieved by sitting submissively like [illegible] dog, and enduring [illegible] [illegible] training oneself to protect others from it, and having pity and concern for the poor and the needy and all Muslims in general. Now one may ascertain how far they are from the description of the people of God (may God be pleased with them). It is reported that 'Abd al-Bari asked Dhu'l-Nun the Egyptian[21] (may God have mercy [illegible] him) to describe the category of saints known [illegible] the Substitutes.[22] He answered: 'You [illegible] asking [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] for you the dark darkness. O 'Abd al-Bari, they [illegible] people who invoke Allah with their hearts [illegible] glorify [illegible] excellence [illegible] they know His greatness. Thus they [illegible] God's witnesses to [illegible] creatures. God envelops them in brilliant light because He loves them. He raises for them the banners [illegible] communicate with Him, and offers them the rank of heroes, and imbues them with patience [illegible] that they do [illegible] disobey Him, and purifies their [illegible] with His care,

and perfumes them with the [redacted] of the people of His association, and dresses them in the fabric of His fondness, [redacted] them with [redacted] delight, [redacted] their hearts with [redacted] from the [redacted] of the Unseen,[23] so that they are [redacted] to communication with Him, [redacted] their aspirations [redacted] directed towards Him, and they reside [redacted] the closest door of His vision within the [redacted] of the Unseen, and He [redacted] bade them be seated on the chairs of those who truly know Him. Then Almighty God addresses them: "If [redacted] aching person comes to you, feeling deprived of Me, you [redacted] [redacted] him, [redacted] who is sick as [redacted] result of My absence, you [redacted] offer him a remedy, or [redacted] who is [redacted] of Me, [redacted] him, or [redacted] who feels secure, warn him, or one who yearns [redacted] converse with Me, give him hope, or [redacted] departing towards Me, prepare him, or one fearful of doing business with Me, encourage him, or one who despairs of receiving My pardon, promise him, [redacted] one hoping for My compassion, give him glad tidings, or one who has [redacted] good opinion of Me, extend [redacted] helping hand [redacted] him, or [redacted] lover of Me, [redacted] with him, [redacted] [redacted] praising My qualities, praise with him, or some- [redacted] whose actions are displeasing, blame him, [redacted] someone in need of guidance to Me, show him the Path." ' (The end of this narrative may be found in *The Book Concerning the Object of Desire*, where it is exhaustively treated.[24])

These, my friend, [redacted] the spiritual [redacted] of the gnostics (*'ârifîn*). As for the people of your time, I [redacted] by God that if you examine their faces, you will see glassy moving eyes,[25] and if you examine their souls (*nufûs*), you will find them heedless, and if you examine their hearts, you will find them distracted and devoid of holiness and good works and utterly ruined. Indeed their hearts have become jungles for savage lions and dens for howling wolves. How can such people be compared to those described by Abu'l-Fayd when he said: 'There are among the [redacted] of God some who are of the elite and some who are excellent.' It was said: 'O Abu'l-Fayd, what is their distinguishing mark?' and [redacted] answered: 'It is when the servant [of God] casts off comfort and strives in obedience [to God] and desires the decline of [worldly] position.' Then he said: 'The Qur'an, with its promises and warnings,/ Has prevented the eyes from sleeping [redacted] night./ Their understanding of [redacted] words of the Generous King/ Has caused their necks to bend in subjection and humility.' Some of the people in [redacted] presence said to him: 'O Abu'l-Fayd, may God have mercy [redacted] you, who are these people?' He answered: 'Woe [redacted] you! They are people who make their knees cushions for their foreheads, and the ground their resting-place. These [redacted] people whose flesh and blood [redacted] mingled with the Qur'an [redacted] that they become isolated from their spouses; it has stirred them at night, [redacted] they have placed it in their hearts and they have journeyed with it;[26] they press it in their bosoms and delight in it. Their will has decided [redacted] it and has therefore worked for it. They have made the Qur'an [redacted] light for their darkness and a guide in

their path and [redacted] preparation for [redacted] to which they testify. They [redacted] apart from others: people rejoice and they grieve, people sleep and they keep vigil, people [redacted] they fast, people feel [redacted] and they are afraid. They hurry for fear of delay and prepare themselves for death.' This narrative [redacted] recounted [redacted] me by Abu'l-Hasan 'Ali ibn [redacted] in the year 594AH.[27]

In this country I have [redacted] some Sufis who wear young men's tight trousers, without feeling any [redacted] of shame before the Merciful. They are completely ignorant of the major and minor obligations [of prayers [redacted] ablutions]. They [redacted] not [redacted] fit to [redacted] [redacted] toilet sweepers. In spite of that, my friend, they [redacted] [redacted] sea-shells in which may be hidden [redacted] precious stone, [redacted] [redacted] fence enclosing a flowering orchard, for among them may be found one who is truthful and aware of the truth, [redacted] [redacted] deeply versed in knowledge who passes unnoticed, carrying their stigma because he shares their company but having nothing in common with them. I happened to meet [redacted] person like this in Egypt, in the Cairo Sufi hostel (*khânaqah*), [redacted] middle-aged person without any faults, who could [redacted] described [redacted] an upright man. And then in Arabil [near Mosul] I [redacted] a shaykh known, among these people, [redacted] the shaykh of shaykhs (this, [redacted] least, is what he himself told me), and I observed that he [redacted] very attentive to each person who spoke to him, who claimed that, in the Maghrib, God has none who know the way to Him or seek to know it. At first your friend [i.e. Ibn 'Arabi himself] did [redacted] [redacted] to speak openly or discuss the subject, but then it occurred to me that to say nothing would be outrageous and wrong, so I mentioned to him some of [redacted] mysterious gifts with which you have been endowed by God, and after that I spoke about some of the spiritual [redacted] of our master Abu Madyan, the purest of saints.[28] Hearing this, he [redacted] greatly perplexed [redacted] exclaimed: 'I [redacted] believed that such things could exist in the Maghrib.' Then some of [redacted] friends asked him about a theological problem concerning [redacted] creation of hell, and I swear by God that all he said in reply was 'I don't know anything about that.' By replying in this fashion, [redacted] did justice to himself, since he now recognized his own deficiency, and his loquacity subsided and his fires grew dim. I told him: 'If this is your state of mind after speaking with me – and my [redacted] is [redacted] inferior that I do not deserve to be numbered [redacted] the Sufis – what would happen if you [redacted] to [redacted] with your own eyes the greatest and [redacted] distinguished of the spiritual [redacted] who live in the Maghrib?' At this he conceded that I was right, and I thanked God for what He had inspired me to say [redacted] what He had taught me.

As for the people in this part of the world [the East] who enjoy listening to music and [redacted] (*ahl al-samâ'*), and have ecstasies, they take their religion for fun [redacted] [redacted] One may hear them say, 'I [redacted] the Almighty and He told me this [redacted] [redacted] [redacted] that.' [redacted] when you ask them for [redacted] evidence or [redacted] acquired in this [redacted] of ecstasy, you find

nothing but [redacted] self-indulgent pleasure [redacted] [redacted] diabolical desire. [redacted] is Satan who cries [redacted] with the tongue [of the Sufi], [redacted] [redacted] [the dancer] falls into a [redacted] [redacted] long as the other distracted one [the singer] continues to bray. It [redacted] like [redacted] shepherd who halloos [redacted] his sheep, so that they [redacted] back and forth without knowing what [redacted] wherefore.[29] [redacted] is incumbent upon every serious Sufi nowadays who would be esteemed and imitated by [redacted] novice [redacted] prohibit *samâ'* absolutely once and for all.[30] We clarified this [redacted] for the people of this country, explaining its position and the abuses [redacted] which it leads, and they argued against us, citing anecdotes concerning Sufi shaykhs who listened to music [redacted] the authority of the *Risâlah* [of al-Qushayri] and other books. We clarified [redacted] ambiguities of these [anecdotes], and analysed the obscure points, until they admitted *samâ'* [redacted] be [redacted] inferior [redacted] of being. Some of them renounced it; others, knowing its inferiority, nevertheless still practise it.

Know, my friend (may God guide you to success), that when, in the Sacred Mosque of Mecca, I read publicly what I have just [redacted] to you with regard [redacted] the self-styled Sufis, criticizing their ways, a certain individual took it amiss. He said: 'What makes him [redacted] this? [redacted] would have been better if he had kept his mouth shut.' [redacted] made these and similar remarks. His opposition only made me [redacted] the more convinced of the truth of what I had said - precisely because he [redacted] [redacted] agitated. Indeed he seemed blind to the sources on which I [redacted] my [redacted]. He agreed with their validity in theory because they had stroked his [redacted] more than once [i.e. he had often heard them]; he [redacted] not repudiate them; on the contrary, he approved of them. However, when the blame fell on his contemporaries, he found this improper because he himself was implicated and [redacted] feared lest the blame should also fall upon him. So [redacted] became sad. If he had been a man of integrity, he would have [redacted] more self-critical.

It has been transmitted [redacted] the authority of Abu [redacted] al-Siddiq[31] that, while conquering [redacted] in the time of the first and favoured generation, when [redacted] necklace, which [redacted] hanging round the neck of [redacted] of [redacted] relatives, was lost, he sighed and said: 'Honesty [redacted] vanished among people nowadays,' and he judged his time on the basis of that one incident. This is mentioned in the chronicles [redacted] the conquest of Mecca. It is also related that when his daughter 'Aisha (may God be pleased with her) considered her time and her contemporaries, and the miserliness and other shortcomings in which they dwelt, sighed and said: 'May God have mercy on Labid[32] who recited, "Those who [redacted] patrons [redacted] [redacted] gone, And I remain among inferiors [as useless] as the [redacted] of a [redacted] camel."' Then she added, rebuking her contemporaries, 'What would he have said had he lived in our time?'

It has been related by several sources, on the authority of Ibn al-Qushayri, [redacted] [redacted] on [redacted] of Ibn Ghanimi, both on the authority of

al-Qushayri (may God bless him), that in his [redacted] criticized his [redacted] temporaries. This person who contradicted me had heard of the [redacted] and agreed with this criticism, and then said: 'In our time only [redacted] left behind of this vanished group.'

> As for the tents, they resemble their tents,
> But the [redacted] of the clan are not the [redacted] of these tents.

The Path has [redacted] interrupted; indeed it has been erased. [redacted] [al-Qushayri] [redacted] already criticized these [pseudo-Sufis] very harshly in the opening chapter of his *Risâlah*, and since this book is well-known, [redacted] stopped referring to it, and related on the authority of Abu Hamid [al-Ghazali] and others, [redacted] the authority of Abu'l-Mughith, in the *Book of the Comforter of the Lonely*,[33] a story reported by Abu'l-Muhallab, who said: 'As I passed by the sea-shore, I saw [redacted] young man who [redacted] dug a hole in the sand. When I asked him why [redacted] had done this, he sighed and cursed the people of his time, saying, "The Path [redacted] become rough and its followers very few [redacted] number; they have laid themselves in [redacted] of licence and have [redacted] on cradles of error, and they justify themselves by citing [redacted] misdeeds of the earlier generations." After saying other similar things, [redacted] stood [redacted] and walked on the water until he disappeared from sight.' Have you ever [redacted] such a thing happen to one who dabbles [redacted] [redacted] that do not concern him! Then we related, on the authority of 'Abd al-Rahman ibn al-Hasan, Harun, Abu Mu'awiyah and al-'Amash, how Abu Salih [redacted] said: 'During the reign of Abu Bakr, when the people of Yemen came, they listened to the Qur'an [redacted] wept. Abu [redacted] (may God [redacted] pleased with him) said: "We were [redacted] like this, but then our hearts hardened."'

There is evidence that the Prophet (may God's blessings be upon him) rebuked [redacted] of his companions when they were being tortured in Mecca for having embraced Islam. One of them was Khabbab,[34] who endured great hardship as a result of his conversion to Islam. [redacted] said: 'We complained to [redacted] Prophet about the misfortune which we had experienced, saying, "Please pray [redacted] God for our sake. [redacted] you [redacted] ask Him to assist us?" The Prophet then [redacted] blushing and said: "By God, [consider] those who [redacted] before you – [redacted] of them would be seized, and then [redacted] [redacted] would be placed [redacted] the top of his head and he would be split into two halves, yet nothing would turn him away from his religion. And [redacted] would be combed with iron combs, penetrating between the sinews and the flesh, yet nothing would turn him away from [redacted] religion." '

O my contradictor, these were the [redacted] that I relied on in blaming the people of my time – may God [redacted] gather me with them [redacted] the Day of Resurrection, [redacted] [redacted] He [redacted] permit [redacted] to die in their state. Why [redacted] [redacted] [redacted] your support, since you know that what I say [redacted] true, [redacted] that

this is the present state of affairs? Why don't you come weeping for your sins and I shall do the same, hoping that God may have mercy upon us? You have allowed yourself to become a deceiver and a compromiser of principles and a leader of compromisers. I swear by God that I would not allow myself to be reduced to such a state. Let us join in lamentation and mourning for our failure (to fulfil our duties) in the short period of man's life, and let us bewail the time spent in trivialities.

By God I swear that if anyone is troubled by such words of reproof, it is because he himself is guilty of the defects criticized. If he had been innocent, he would have remained calm, as calm as if we had cursed thieves, highway robbers and the like. But since he himself was implicated among these, he resorted to contradiction and, by so doing, has distanced himself from God, and his opposition to us need be regarded as the first [illegible] that has been shed over the abandoned encampment,[35] for if anyone talks about the vices of the self and its various conditions, and exposes its shortcomings and criticizes it, either specifically or in general, he will be condemned by his contemporaries because what he says is incompatible with their interests. Only when his generation is dead and gone, and another generation has come, will people recognize the value of his words. Then people will say: 'So-and-so, may God bless him, said this, and this is how people have always been.'

Ibn 'Arabi Examines His Own soul

My friend (may God grant you long life), I now wish to inform you about something which occurred between me and my self [i.e. which greatly disturbed my soul]. In this land I find my soul imprisoned and downtrodden, and, as my friend knows, I am one who believes in the positive existence of the soul, and I do not consider it correct to say that it can die in relation to its qualities because I know its realities and its place. Having found that God had opened to my heart the door of wisdom (*hikmah*), and had let the seas of wisdom flow into it and had let my secret swim in their depths, by God I found that I was looking at a great expanse of sea, whose waves were high and roaring, whipped up by hurricane winds, to the point that when again I contemplated the surge of the waves of gnosis and mysteries within my bosom, I suddenly found that the great expanse of that turbulent sea was calm and motionless in comparison with the waves of wisdom splashing within my bosom. It was above all in the sanctuary of Mecca that I was overwhelmed by terror, anxiety and dread. So I vowed not to sit and instruct people any [illegible] However, I was given strict orders by God to sit and offer people advice, and since this injunction was enjoined on me though by compulsion, I was with eloquence sharp as a drawn sword.

Then I retired alone to my dwelling place and began to compare the

mystical gifts that God had bestowed upon me in the light of my real state. [redacted] since I could find no link between the two, nor any cause [redacted] explain them, I [redacted] by God, my friend, that I became afraid that God had [redacted] [redacted] trap to test me. So I retired alone, obsessed by this thought, [redacted] God alone knows, finding no way to examine my soul. All access had become blocked [redacted] the primordial truths [redacted] intuitive knowledge. Finally, by God's grace, I had a vision which enabled me to prevail over my soul (*nafs*), and I [redacted] able to assess its merits. In this vision I saw myself entering paradise, and having gained admittance without seeing either hell-fire, or the reckoning, or anything of the horrors of the Day of Judgement, I experienced immeasurable [redacted] [redacted] gladness, and I praised God.

When I woke up, I realized that my [redacted] [redacted] somewhat unbalanced, and that my soul, with regard to the gifts of knowledge bestowed by God, had claimed a higher rank than that which corresponded to its proper station. If my soul had perceived the Reality [of God] with divine awareness, it would have lost itself and then it would not have experienced any pleasure in being admitted to paradise, nor that feeling of calm, since its absorption in God's Majesty would have made it oblivious to its own sense of calm and oblivious to its release from the terrible trials of the Day of Judgement. [redacted] my soul then sought to refute [redacted] by protesting that [redacted] has different faculties and hierarchies (so that it is possible [redacted] experience pleasure and, at the [redacted] time, to witness the Reality of God). I did not heed this objection, and hence my argument [redacted] still valid. I continued to remind the soul of its imperfection and the absurdity of its claims.

After this I thanked God for having granted [redacted] victory over my soul, and I said [redacted] her: 'O my soul! By the power of Him who gave you [redacted] nature inclined to rebellion and made you susceptible to all kinds of blameworthy traits, I [redacted] that I shall [redacted] leave you in peace until you live up to the teachings of the Book of Allah and the way of the Prophet (God's blessings [redacted] upon him); if you [redacted] to do this and I find no defect in you, then I shall allow you to establish upon [redacted] some of your authority. God says that you have [redacted] good example in the Messenger of God, and Ibn Mas'ud[36] said: "Consider yourself the [redacted] addressed when you hear Him say: O you who are believers . . ." When I find you failing [to heed these words], I [redacted] pity for you and make you follow in the footsteps of the poorer companions of the Prophet, to whose station you think you belong [redacted].'

The Example [redacted] Uways

[redacted] [redacted] of disciples, according to the Master of Messengers, [redacted] Uways [redacted] Amir al-Qarani (may God be pleased with him), whom Muhammad

(may God bless him) recommended to 'Umar and others. It is reported, [illegible] the authority of Asbagh ibn Zayd, that if Uways [illegible] of doors, [illegible] to say: 'This night is for bowing in prayer,' and he bowed until morning, and if it was evening, he used to give away in charity all [illegible] clothes and food that [illegible] in his house, after which he would say: 'O God, if anybody [illegible] dies of hunger, don't blame [illegible] for it, [illegible] if anybody [illegible] dies naked, don't blame me for it.'[37]

'By God, I implore you, my soul, did you [illegible] possess any of these qualities? Have you ever spent the night in [illegible] prostration?'

'No, by God, nothing of this ever happened to me,' replied my soul, 'but some sparks of truth shine through this reported speech, [illegible] I hope you will draw my attention to them.'

'Yes,' I said, 'Uways [illegible] firmly established in his spiritual station (*maqâm*), and had indisputable evidence from his Lord, and [illegible] sure of the states that he had already traversed.'

Abu Yazid [al-Bistami],[38] who was [illegible] of the spiritual Poles, [illegible] have this same distinction. He used to say: 'I encounter the night, [illegible] I beg to spend it bowing and prostrating; then I stand in prayer without prostrating, or I prostrate without standing up' . . .

'O master,' said my soul, 'please treat me gently and don't be [illegible] hasty. It seems to [illegible] that, in one respect, al-Hallaj surpasses Uways. This is what al-Hallaj[39] (may God be pleased with him) said concerning his spiritual state: "If a [illegible] is deprived of food for twenty days, and then some food is brought to him, and he hears that in the district [where he lives] there is someone in greater need of that food; if he then eats it, [illegible] does not favour that needy person, he has failed." This is indeed [illegible] high spiritual degree. Here, on the other hand, is Uways, who would only give away in charity the surplus of his food and his clothes. He satisfied his needs first, then he [illegible] away what remained of his food every night. Although he might know of [illegible] hungry person, he did [illegible] offer his food to him, [illegible] you see.'

'My dear soul,' I replied, 'you oppose me [illegible] someone who fails [illegible] analyse the truth. Please listen to what I have to say, and remember that Uways is [illegible] incomparable Imam. If the gnostic [illegible] [illegible] spiritual [illegible] like al-Hallaj, he differentiates between his soul and that of others: he [illegible] his [illegible] soul with severity, coercion and torture, whereas he treats the souls of others with preference and mercy and tenderness. But if the gnostic [illegible] [illegible] man of high degree, with power and expertise, his soul would become a stranger to him: he would [illegible] longer differentiate between it and other souls in this world; whatever obligations of mercy and tenderness that he may feel for the souls of others, he should [illegible] for his [illegible] soul, since she has become a stranger to him. He has risen high up, leaving her among those of her [illegible] So [illegible] [illegible] obliged [illegible] feel affection for her, just [illegible] [illegible] is obliged to feel affection for others. If the gnostic

goes out to give alms, he should offer his charity to the first Muslim whom he meets. If he leaves this poor man and gives alms to another, he [illegible] moved from the satisfaction of his Lord to the pleasure of his own soul. Since the gnostic [illegible] his livelihood to His Creator, he knows that he is [illegible] messenger [illegible] the world of animal souls and should share with them that with which he has been provided. The first soul to [illegible] him is his own soul, [illegible] that of another. The souls of others are not his closest relatives, his [illegible] soul is his [illegible] of kin: she abides by his door and is the first to [illegible] him when he opens the door. She begs him to give her that with which he has been entrusted, and since she is the first to ask, he should serve her before anyone else.'

The man of law alludes to this secret when he says: 'Begin with your self, then those whom you support. Relatives [illegible] the [illegible] suitable [illegible] the recipients of your charity because they [illegible] attached to you and remain [illegible] your door.' Other people [illegible] not so attached to you, nor do they wait at your door like your soul and your next of kin.[40]

Similarly, when secrets proceed from the Truth out of the door of His mercy, the first heart found exposed and begging [illegible] the door will receive its portion of wisdom, and this portion will depend upon the degree of yearning, hunger, submissiveness and need which he or she possesses. For this [illegible] the great shaykhs say: 'Be ready for the soft breezes; whoever is late or forgets is forgotten.'[41] I have thus clarified the spiritual status of al-Hallaj and that of Uways; despite its apparent height, the former is closer to the level of common men.

It is reported, on the authority of Abu Hurayrah, that when the Messenger of Allah [illegible] amidst [illegible] circle of his Companions, he said: 'Tomorrow [illegible] man from among the people of paradise will pray with you.'[42] Abu Hurayrah said: 'I became ambitious to be myself that man, [illegible] I [illegible] and prayed behind the Prophet (may God bless him), and I remained in the mosque until everybody had left. Only he [the Prophet] and I remained. At that moment a black [illegible] came forward. He was clothed in a single piece of cloth, over which he wore [illegible] patched robe. He approached until he shook the Prophet by the hand, and said: "O Prophet of Allah, pray to God on my behalf," after which the Prophet prayed for him. Later I asked: "O Messenger of Allah, was it him?" "Yes," replied the Prophet, "and he is a slave." I asked: "Why don't you buy him and [illegible] him free?" He answered: "And how can I do that if God [illegible] to make him one of the kings of paradise! O Abu Hurayrah, you should know that the people of paradise have leaders and kings and that this black [illegible] [illegible] become [illegible] of them. O Abu Hurayrah, Almighty God loves those of his creatures who are devout, unknown and innocent, with unkempt hair and dusty faces, whose stomachs are empty because [they rely] on licit earnings, those who, if they seek permission to speak with princes, [illegible] turned away, and if they [illegible] propose to those tender

glamorous girls who lead a life of luxury and ease, they do not marry them, if they are absent, they missed, and if they are present, they have been invited, and if they appear, nobody happy as a consequence, and if they fall ill, nobody visits them, and if they die, nobody sees them die." The Companions of the Prophet asked: "O Messenger of Allah, how will we recognize such man?" answered: "Uways al-Qarani is such a man." They asked: "And who is Uways al-Qarani?" He said: "A man with black eyes, a ruddy complexion wide shoulders, of medium height, tough-skinned, his chin on his breast, eyes down to the place of prostration, his right hand placed over his left, reciting the Qur'an and enduring hardship; he has only two tattered garments, nobody pays any heed; clothed in woollen cloak, he is unknown on earth, but known in paradise, for if swears by God, God makes oaths true; under left shoulder there is a white glow. On the Day of Resurrection the of God are told 'Enter paradise,' and Uways is told 'Stop and intercede,' and so God makes him intercede for a quantity like that of Rabi'ah and Mudar.[43] O 'Umar and 'Ali, if you ever meet him, ask him to pray God for you, and God will pardon you."'

'Umar 'Ali spent years looking for Uways and did find him until the end of the year in which 'Umar (may God be pleased with him) died. In that year 'Ali ibn Abi Qubays stood and called in a loud voice: 'O pilgrims of Yemen, is there a man among you named Uways from Murad?' Then old man with a long beard stepped forward and said: 'A nephew of mine is called Uways, but he is of lowly condition and is held in such low that he is not worthy to be summoned before you. is tending our camels and is one of our dependants.'

'And where is this nephew of yours, and where be found?', asked 'Umar, pretending to indifferent.

'At the foot of Mount 'Arafat,' replied the old man.

So 'Umar and 'Ali swiftly mounted and rode to 'Arafat,[44] where they found Uways standing in prayer beside with camels grazing around him. They tethered their two donkeys and approached him, saying: 'Peace be upon you and God's mercy and blessings.' Uways then quickened prayer, saying: 'And be upon you and God's mercy and blessings.'

'Who you?' inquired 'Umar, when Uways had finished praying.

'A camelherd labourer for certain people,' replied.

'We are not asking whether you are a camelherd whether you a labourer,' they said. 'We to know your name.'

"'Abd Allah' [i.e. a of God], he replied.

'Yes,' they said, 'we know that the peoples of the earth and the heavens all of God, but what is the name that your mother gave you?'

'What do you both with me?' he asked.

They answered: 'Muhammad – may God bless him – described Uways al-Qarani [illegible] us. We noticed your blue-black skin. [illegible] also [illegible] known to [illegible] that you have [illegible] shining white spot under your left shoulder, so show [illegible] If [illegible] is there, you [illegible] the person (whom we [illegible] looking for).'

When he uncovered his shoulder, they saw the shining patch of skin. So they kissed him and said: 'We bear witness that you [illegible] Uways al-Qarani. Pray [illegible] God for us [illegible] will pardon us.'

He said: 'In my prayers I don't favour my soul [illegible] any of the [illegible] of Adam, be they on land or sea, male or female, unless they are believers. God made known to you my business, but who [illegible] you?'

'Ali answered: 'As for this man, he is 'Umar, the Prince of Believers, [illegible] I am 'Ali ibn Abi Talib.'

Uways stood up [illegible] said: 'Peace be upon you and God's mercy and blessings, O Prince of Believers, and the [illegible] to you, 'Ali ibn Abi Talib. For the sake of this nation may God reward you well.'

'And for the sake of your soul may God reward you well,' they said, and then 'Umar added: 'Stay here until I go to Mecca and bring you back [illegible] gift and some clothing. Let us [illegible] again in this same place.'

'O Prince of Believers,' said Uways, 'there can be no appointment between you and me. I'm [illegible] sure that you will recognize me after today. What shall I do with the gift? What shall I do with the clothing? Don't you [illegible] that I wear [illegible] sheet and [illegible] woollen cloak. [illegible] will they ever become old and shabby? Don't you see that I mend my shoes, so when will they become old? I receive four dirhams for my work as a camelherd, but when [illegible] I spend them? O Prince of Believers, between you and [illegible] [illegible] road [illegible] steep [illegible] climb.'

When 'Umar heard these words, he threw his turban [illegible] the ground and called out in [illegible] loud voice: 'I wish to God that 'Umar's mother had never given birth to 'Umar; I wish [illegible] God she [illegible] been barren or had been careless in her pregnancy.'

'O Prince of Believers, you stay there and I [illegible] stay here,' exclaimed Uways.

Then 'Umar returned home, and Uways took the camels back [illegible] their [illegible] and gave up being [illegible] camelherd, devoting himself to [illegible] life of worship until he returned to Almighty God.

According to al-Mughirah,[45] Uways would sometimes give away all his clothes in charity, until he [illegible] [illegible] and had nothing to [illegible] to attend the Friday prayer. And this [illegible] is confirmed by [illegible] of the sayings of the Prophet (may God bless him), reported by Ibn Dinar: 'Among my nation there are [illegible] who cannot come [illegible] the mosque [illegible] the public place of prayer (used on feast-days) [illegible] account of their nakedness. Faith prevents them from asking other people for favours. Uways al-Qarani is one of these.'

'Abdallah ibn Salma said: 'We conquered Azerbayjan and Uways [illegible] with us, and on the journey back he fell ill. We carried him, but he could not resist [his illness] and died. When we dismounted, [illegible] found that [illegible] grave had already been dug, and there [illegible] running water [illegible] [illegible] winding-sheet and balm. So we washed him and wrapped him in the winding-sheet; we prayed for him and buried him. Later [illegible] of us said to the others: "Let us dismount to identify his grave." But when [illegible] did so, we could not find the grave or any trace of it.' [46]

Harim ibn Hayyan said: 'I went to Kufah. The only difficulty that I encountered [illegible] [in finding] Uways and asking for him. I rushed [illegible] [illegible] him on the shore of the Euphrates, where he [illegible] performing ablution and washing his clothes. The description [which I had been given enabled] [illegible] to identify him. He [illegible] a man of ruddy complexion, bare-headed, with [illegible] thick beard and [illegible] venerable appearance. So I greeted him and offered him my hand to shake, but he refused to do so. This lesson made me choke because of his condition. Then I addressed him: "O Uways, peace be upon you. How are you, my brother?" He replied: "And may God bless you, O Harim ibn Hayyan. How [illegible] you? And who guided you to me?" I answered: "Almighty God." [illegible] said: "Say of Him, our Lord is above all things and our Lord's promise has been fulfilled."[47] I said: "God bless you, how did you know my name and my father's name, for I swear by God that I have never seen you and you have [illegible] [illegible] me?" He said: "My spirit knew your spirit when my soul spoke to your soul. The spirits have souls in the same way [illegible] bodies have souls, and believers know each other through the Spirit of Almighty God, even though they may live far away from one another." I said to him: "Tell me something about the Messenger of [illegible] – may God bless him – that I may learn it from you." He said: "I did not live to see the Prophet – may God bless him – nor did I [illegible] share his company. But I did [illegible] some of the narrators of the Prophet's sayings. Some sayings reached me just as others reached you. As for me, I do not wish to engage in that [profession],[48] nor would I want to be [illegible] judge or [illegible] mufti." Then I said: "Recite to [illegible] [illegible] verses of the Qur'an so I may hear them from you, and pray [illegible] God for [illegible] with [illegible] prayer of supplication, and give me [illegible] word of advice."

'He took me by the hand and [illegible] began walking along the shore of the Euphrates. Then he spoke: "My Lord said – and the best sayings are those of my Lord, the Almighty and Merciful, and His words are the truest – 'The Day of Distinction [between the true and the false] is the [illegible] appointed for [illegible] of them.'" This made him sob until I thought he had lost consciousness. Then he continued to recite until he reached "the Day when no protector will be able to intercede for [illegible] client, nor will they be assisted, except those upon whom God will have bestowed [illegible] mercy, for He alone is the Mighty, the Merciful." [illegible]

'After this he said: "O Ibn Hayyan, your father died and you are [redacted] die. Abu Hayyan died, [redacted] he will be [redacted] either [redacted] heaven or hell. Adam died and Eve died, O Ibn Hayyan, and God's messenger Muhammad – God's blessings be upon him – died, O Ibn Hayyan; Abu Bakr, the Caliph of the Muslims, died, and my friend, my sincere friend, 'Umar died. O 'Umar!" (This [redacted] the end of 'Umar's reign [redacted] Caliph.) I told him, "God bless you! 'Umar did not die." Uways said: "My Lord announced his death to me. I know what I am saying, and tomorrow you will be among the dead," and he addressed to God some short prayers of supplication. Then he said: "O Ibn Hayyan, this is my word of advice to you: Follow God's Book, for He is Almighty and Merciful, and proclaim [redacted] death of devout believers [redacted] proclaim the [redacted] of devout Muslims. For your sake my soul grieves. You must keep death in mind; never, for one moment, should it leave your heart. Do this, rebuke your people [for their misdeeds] if you [redacted] them, work for the benefit of your soul, and do not depart from the community of believers, because, if you do, you will unconsciously depart from your religion, and then you will [redacted] and enter hell [redacted] the Day of Resurrection."

'And he prayed: "O God, this man claims that he loves [redacted] and visits me for Your sake, so let him enter my place and visit paradise, Your house, the house of peace, and make him content with few worldly things, and bestow upon him in this world ease and good health, [redacted] make [redacted] thankful for whatever You give him." Then [redacted] said: "O Harim ibn Hayyan, farewell and [redacted] be with you. From today onwards, I don't [redacted] you to search for [redacted] or to ask for [redacted] Remember me and I shall remember you, and I shall pray for you if God the Almighty so wills. [redacted] out on your journey from here [redacted] that I can also set out from here."

'I [Harim ibn Hayyan], asked [redacted] walk with him for [redacted] hour, but he refused [redacted] left [redacted] [redacted] [redacted] weeping and I [redacted] also weeping. He entered some side-streets, and from that moment onwards, when I asked for him [redacted] searched for him, I could find no one who was able to give [redacted] any news of him.'[30]

The Path to Paradise

My friend, do your [redacted] to obtain the fine characteristics of [redacted] people for whom [redacted] Messenger of Allah used to weep with yearning. Such people [redacted] [redacted] influenced by the words of those deluded scholars who [redacted] soft silk clothes and [redacted] rich food, and who respond to criticism by reciting [from the Qur'an]: 'And whatever you [redacted] given is only for the enjoyment of life in this world and for its embellishment.'[31] The Prophet (may God [redacted] him) foresaw that they would say this.

Concerning this I told them [redacted] [redacted] written down for us by our

shaykh Abu Muhammad ibn Muhammad ibn Sa'id Allah ibn Muhammad al-Bujli of Baghdad, the Hanafi (may God be pleased with him). Sa'id ibn Zayd ibn Nufayl reported: 'I heard the Prophet – may God bless him – say to Usamah ibn Zayd:[32] "O Usamah, you have to follow the path to paradise, and beware of being shaken from it." Then [redacted] [Usamah] said: "O Messenger of Allah, what is the shortest method of traversing it?" He [the Prophet] replied: "Thirst in the midday heat and the soul's [redacted] from the pleasures of this world. And [redacted] that stage of the journey, O Usamah, you have to fast, for it draws one nearer [redacted] Almighty God. There is nothing more pleasing to Almighty God than the smell of the mouth of the fasting person,[33] because he has abstained from food and drink for the sake of Almighty God, and if you [redacted] approach death with your stomach hungry and your liver thirsty, do so, for you will attain [redacted] honourable position in the hereafter and you will be placed in the company of the prophets – God bless them all. They will be happy [redacted] receive your soul; the Omnipotent will pray for you. Therefore, O Usamah, beware of quarrelling with anyone who has a hungry liver, because he will curse you before Almighty God on the Day of Resurrection. O Usamah, beware of God's servants, who [redacted] away their flesh and scorch their skin with cold and winds and hot sandstorms, and have made their livers so thirsty that they faint. God observes them and boasts to the angels about them. Peace be upon them! Earthquakes and civil [redacted] will be diverted for their sake."

'Then the Prophet – may God bless him – wept until his weeping became so loud that people feared to speak to him and thought that something [redacted] befallen them from the heavens. Finally he spoke and said: "Woe unto this nation for opposing those who obey their Lord Allah, the Almighty and Merciful. How dare they kill them and distrust them because they obey Almighty God!" Then 'Umar ibn al-Khattab – may God be pleased with him – asked: "And will there be people on the path of Islam in those days?" The Prophet said, "Yes." "Then why will they kill [redacted] who obeys God and orders them to obey God?" 'Umar asked.

'He [the Prophet] answered: "O 'Umar, people will stray from the path, and will mount animals and [redacted] the softest of clothes, and the [redacted] of Persia will serve them. Men will beautify themselves like a woman who makes herself up for her husband, and the women will dress in finery like tyrant kings; and if [redacted] devout man from among them speaks out and objects, he will be told [redacted] he is Satan's associate and the source of error because he condemns God's embellishments and the good things with which God has provided them. They will recite the Book of God without knowledge; they will despise the Friends of Allah."[34]

'"O Usamah, you should know that the people [redacted] to God on the Day of Resurrection will be those who have extended their hunger

and thirst. They [redacted] the devout hidden ones whom, if seen, [redacted] approached and whom, if missing, [redacted] not missed. They [redacted] known to the earth, [redacted] they [redacted] known in heaven, for they [redacted] surrounded by angels, yet they are [redacted] from the people of earth. Other people take pleasure in their greed, whereas they take pleasure in hunger [redacted] thirst. Other people [redacted] soft garments, whereas they wear rough [redacted] Other people recline on beds, but they recline on foreheads and knees. Other people laugh, but they weep. O Usamah, Almighty God does not combine hardship for them in this world [redacted] the hereafter, for paradise belongs to them. O Usamah, I hope that I [redacted] [redacted] them, for they have an eminent position in the hereafter, and the earth is generous to them, and the neighbour is satisfied with them; the person who opposes them is a loser, [redacted] [redacted] earth weeps [redacted] lose them. God [redacted] every [redacted] where there [redacted] [redacted] people [redacted] them. And He will not inflict pain on those among whom they happen to reside. Follow them, for through them you may be saved, and take care [redacted] to lose hold of what they teach, otherwise you will slip and plunge into hell. They do not devote themselves to the world with the devotion that dogs have for corpses. Instead they occupy themselves with obedience to Almighty God. People think that they are sick because they are dusty and their hair is unkempt, but this is [redacted] so. People think that they [redacted] mad, but they [redacted] not mad.[35] It seems that they have lost their wits, because their hearts have perceived something that has taken their minds away from this world. O Usamah, they have become wise whereas other people have lost their wits. It is they who will be [redacted] in high [redacted] in the hereafter."'

The [redacted] Remorse

When I [redacted] that the true and worthy friend is nowhere to be found, [redacted] that the sincere [redacted] affectionate physician is non-existent, I became sad. I noticed that every human being is satisfied with his condition and does [redacted] observe either his [redacted] defects or those of his brother. [redacted] [redacted] person [redacted] be a sincere friend, nor can he attain his proper spiritual station. Concerning the absence of true friendship and people's enslavement [redacted] their condition, I composed [redacted] [redacted]

I remembered my sins; they troubled me and made me weep,
[redacted] they [redacted] banishing [redacted] from God's proximity.
How [redacted] there be salvation for the way I have wasted my life?
The Lord [redacted] question me about it [redacted] the Resurrection Day.
If only [redacted] ears had not heard words of passion,
If only my eyes had not [redacted] any beauty,
If only neither my palm nor foot had been created,
Nor even my tongue, and my heart had not existed,

Or else I had been created to lead a life of bliss,
Then, both publicly and privately, my Lord would have given [redacted] success,
And I would not have adored anyone who would be of no benefit,
When, on the Resurrection Day, the Merciful would question [redacted] about it.
If only I hadn't grieved for places with which I was intimate.
If only I hadn't yearned for certain dwellings and encampments.
If only I hadn't flirted with white prima donnas
As they sang on couches lamenting my fate.
If only I hadn't drunk vintage wine,
Stored up since the days of [redacted] Dhi Yazan.[56]
If only I hadn't hoped for things unattainable.
If only I hadn't wasted my time in the causes of destruction.
If only I hadn't made speeches about science and knowledge,
Until they called [redacted] the clever scholar.
The cursed Iblis still toyed with me
And the [redacted] of my sin [redacted] burning [redacted] within.
For how long shall I continue to sin and be grieved by it?
And You – may Your name be praised – protect me.
The mornings and evenings I spend in things
That draw [redacted] to misfortune and further from fortune.
How often have I struggled with him (Iblis),[57] hidden from God's servants,
While the eye of God [redacted] watching me!
Even the [redacted] of shame before the Merciful does [redacted] deter [redacted]
From sins which, if He wills, could destroy me,
And [redacted] friend among the brethren could [redacted] me
From the sleep conveying me to God's punishment.
I have [redacted] friend save the one who [redacted] my error
And offers [redacted] advice from time to time.
The true friend is like soap that washes garments clean
From dirt or filth or squalor.
Then, on my right, I heard my companion,[58]
Prodding, warning and restraining [redacted]
'O master, [redacted] God protect you, listen to [redacted] please.
Many a time have I come and the doorman has barred my way.'
He is not a human being whom you [redacted] beat or harm,
But your action which will be raised in the shroud (of death).
Look [redacted] him and improve the image [redacted] [redacted]
He is courteous if from the world you become estranged.
It is [redacted] who keeps your two enemies [redacted] bay (the world and the devil)
If they entice you, and this is one of the greatest of blessings.
Hearing his advice, my soul yearned after it,
And said 'Will the Merciful accept me?'
'O soul,' I replied, 'whatever [redacted] you take,
[redacted] will come rushing towards you with blessings and bounty.' [redacted]
O my friend, may God preserve you!
I [redacted] afraid that you would say, in a bitter tone,
Like [redacted] who, in his goal, has strayed from the proper way,
'I feel sorry for myself [redacted] I weep for my negligence,

And I lament for the heart [redacted] has erred from the path of goodness.'
[redacted] proximity [redacted] my God can be measured
By my heart's proximity [redacted] Him, then [redacted] I am far away.
If He [redacted] to reward [redacted] for what I have done,
Then what reward would there [redacted] but [redacted] [redacted] turned roughly away!
[redacted] I have hope in Him, both secretly [redacted] openly,
And if this passion [redacted] useful [redacted] me, then how fortunate I [redacted] [redacted]
If I [redacted] like [redacted] full moon whose light has been dimmed by ignorance,
Then God will very soon give [redacted] [redacted] its bliss.
[redacted] [redacted] sin, nor my misguided action, will remove [redacted] far from Him;
Therefore [redacted] offence is more befitting for me as a slave.
Just [redacted] generosity, beautiful clemency, together with approbation,
Are the [redacted] appropriate things to coexist with the majesty of God,
So gracious majesty is the [redacted] attribute of the Creator,
And faith truly resides in me. Let happiness [redacted] mine!

This, my friend, is what God has commanded your loved one and sincere [redacted] [redacted] address [redacted] you. 'God is not shy about [telling] the truth',[60] and God should receive His due. And know that this epistle is [redacted] of God's great bounties to you and one of His [redacted] precious gifts to you. May blessed fragrant peace [redacted] upon the Prophet as well as God's mercy and blessings; and may peace be upon us [redacted] upon God's servants and upon you; and may the mercy of God [redacted] His blessings [redacted] peace [redacted] upon us.

To you in particular [I send] greetings from Badr the Ethiopian[61] and all our friends here. And my regards to your children and companions, and your friends: the blessed shaykh Abu 'Abdallah ibn al-Murabit,[62] and the well-guided shaykh Abu 'Atiq, and the good neighbour al-Hajj Mu'afi, and the learned reciter of the Qur'an Abu Muhammad, and the devout persevering [redacted] Abu Qasim al-Qabisi, and the honest faqir with the wounded heart 'Abd al-Jabbar,[63] and the good honest courtier 'Abd al-'Aziz al-Babili, and my sincere and dear friend Abu 'Abdallah al-Qattan,[64] with whom, thanks [redacted] you, a mutual bond of friendship [redacted] established. And I inform you of the death of [redacted] al-Ta'ib, [redacted] God have mercy [redacted] him, who died between Mecca and Medina, [redacted] a distance of [redacted] day's journey from Mecca, between Marwah and 'Asfan, while [redacted] [redacted] way to visit the Prophet, may God bless him. [redacted] died [redacted] a martyr between the two sanctuaries, and he will be called to safety on the Day of Judgement.

Your friend writes this epistle to you from Mecca, may God guard [redacted] [redacted] honour it, in the month of Rabi'ah al-Awwal in the year 600AH. He [Ibn 'Arabi] [redacted] seven circumambulations with it and made it touch [redacted] [redacted] Stone,[65] [redacted] then approached [redacted] the door of the [redacted] and [redacted] [redacted] around the Ka'ba, and I [redacted] inside the Ka'ba with it and visited the sacred places to draw upon it divine favour and blessings.

And thanks be to God, the Lord of the Universe, [redacted] peace be upon Muhammad, the Seal of the Prophets and the [redacted] messenger, and upon his people who [redacted] pure and upon [redacted] his companions, and upon his wives, the mothers of the faithful, and [redacted] the good servants of God, and thanks [redacted] [redacted] the Lord of the Universe.

NOTES

1. The work is generally entitled [redacted] *al-Quds fi* [redacted] *al-Nafs* ('The Spirit of Holiness in Counselling the Soul'). A variant of *Munâsahat al-Nafs* is [redacted] *al-Nafs*, which means 'examining the soul'. [redacted] titles convey the psychological [redacted] of the work.
2. *Vidas de* [redacted] *andaluces. La 'Epístola de* [redacted] *santidad'* [redacted] *Ibn 'Arabi* [redacted] *Murcia* (Madrid: Escuela de Estudios Árabes [redacted] Madrid y Granada, 1933).
3. *Mystical Dimensions of Islam* (Univ. of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, 1975) p. 28.
4. Ibn 'Arabi first visited his friend in Tunis in 590/1193–4. During this stay he [redacted] al-Mahdawi's own shaykh, al-Kinani, making the journey bare-footed [redacted] a sign of respect. He visited his friend again in 598/1201 on [redacted] way to [redacted] to perform the pilgrimage, passing through Alexandria and Cairo. Al-Mahdawi held public office and [redacted] [redacted] person of some distinction.
5. 'Umar al-Khattab, the second orthodox caliph (ruled 634–44CE), [redacted] [redacted] stern [redacted] just man. His way of life was simple, austere and unostentatious.
6. [redacted] 'Arabi gives the following chain of transmission for this saying of Uways: [redacted] ibn Ja'far, Muhammad ibn Harir, Muhammad ibn Hamid, Zafir ibn Sulayman, Sharik ibn Jabir, Ash'abi, a man from Murad, Uways.
7. We have translated *nafs* as 'self', 'soul' [redacted] 'ego'. None of these is altogether satisfactory: 'self' is [redacted] abstract; 'soul' too spiritual; 'ego' too Freudian. Three characteristics of the *nafs* are mentioned in the Qur'an: 1. It is *ammârah* (12:53), because, being associated with the appetites, it may impel man to do evil; 2. It is *lawwâmah* (75:2), because it reproaches man for his shortcomings; in this [redacted] it is the voice of one's [redacted] conscience; 3 It is *mutma'innah* (89:27), tranquil, when the conscience is clear. The *nafs* is intermediate between the spirit (*rûh*) and the body (*jism*). [redacted] [redacted] be luminous and subtle, [redacted] [redacted] and dense, depending on [redacted] person's spiritual degree. Sufis sometimes compare the *nafs* to [redacted] wild horse which has to be broken in and trained so that the rider can reach [redacted] goal.
8. Abu Ishaq Ibrahim ibn Adham ibn Mansur (d. [redacted] 166/783), an early Sufi from Balkh in Khurasan, renowned for his abstinence and trust in God. Al-Junayd [redacted] him 'the key of mystical sciences'. He [redacted] [redacted] disciple of the mysterious [redacted] [redacted] studied under Imam Abu Hanifah.
9. Al-Tirmidhi (d. 285/898), surnamed al-Hakim, 'the philosopher', [redacted] native of Khurasan, author of *Khatm al-Awliyâ'* ('Seal of the Saints'), a work much admired by Ibn 'Arabi.
10. [redacted] its association with thé wind and the spoken word, the word *nafas*, 'breath', is [redacted] etymologically [redacted] semantically with *nafs*, 'soul', [redacted] *tanfis*,

'to comfort, to relieve, [illegible] sorrow.' See Note 41 below. The Divine Breath is really synonymous with the Holy Spirit (*rûh al-quds*).

11. The early Sufis wore patched garments because they could [illegible] afford to buy [illegible] clothes [illegible] were indifferent to their appearance. By the eleventh century the patched frock, called *muraqqa'ah* or *khirqah*, had become [illegible] kind of Sufi uniform. 'Ali al-Hujwiri (d. 465/1072), who devotes [illegible] chapter to this subject in his *Kashf al-Mahjûb*, warns against the dangers of pride and hypocrisy: 'If, by wearing this garb, you wish to make it known to God that you are one of the elect, God knows that already; [illegible] if you wish to show to the people that you belong to God, should your claim be true, you [illegible] guilty of ostentation; and should it be false, of hypocrisy' (trans. Reynold A. Nicholson, Luzac, London, 1936, (repr. 1976), p. 48).
12. These pseudo-Sufis identify the *haqîqah* with the corpus of Islamic law known as [illegible] *shari'ah*, and contrast the Sufi mystical way (*tarîqah*) with the *haqîqah* [illegible] order to demonstrate that they follow the spirit rather than the letter of religion, little realizing that they have allowed the *tarîqah* to degenerate into empty ritual. Like all true spiritual masters, Ibn 'Arabi insists that there is no contradiction between the inner and outer aspects of Islam; the two [illegible] complementary. The word *haqîqah* [illegible] 'truth' [illegible] 'reality', [illegible] in the Sufi context, it refers to the [illegible] grade of the Path.
13. An early Syrian ascetic (d. 830), renowned for his [illegible] of self-mortification, [illegible] spiritual descendant of Hasan al-Basri.
14. The word *sûfi* is usually said to derive either from *safâ*, purity, because the Sufis have pure sincere hearts, or from *sûf*, wool, because they used to wear woollen garments. Ibn 'Arabi here makes a pun [illegible] the word *sûfi* which [illegible] [illegible] conveyed in translation.
15. The chain of transmission is as follows: Abu al-Walîd ibn al-'Arabi and Abu 'Abd Allah ibn 'Isuni, Ahmad al-Shahid, Qadi Abi Bakr ibn al-'Arabi al-Mughafiri, Abu al-Mutahhar Sa'd ibn 'Abd Allah al-Asbahani, Ahmad ibn Ahmad al-Asbahani, Ahmad ibn 'Abd Allah, Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn 'Ali, Ahmad ibn al-Haytham, Muslim ibn Ibrahim, Bishr ibn Matar ibn Hakim ibn Dinar al-Qati'i, who heard it from 'Umar and Ibn Dinar, who [illegible] [illegible] agent to the family of al-Zubayr, reported by Malik ibn Dinar from [illegible] Shaykh of the Ansar (the Helpers in Medina), [illegible] the authority of Salim, client of Abu Hudhayfah.
16. The son of an emancipated slave and [illegible] companion of [illegible] al-Basri, he is said to have performed many miracles, including walking [illegible] water. It is related that he said: 'The deed that I love best is sincerity in doing' (Hujwiri, *Kashf*, p. 89). [illegible] died in 131/748–9.
17. Al-Qushayri (d. 465/1073), [illegible] disciple of 'Abd al-Rahman al-Sulami (d. 412/1021), taught in Baghdad and [illegible] the author of many works. His *Risâlah*, to which [illegible] 'Arabi frequently refers, is [illegible] standard textbook on Sufism. It [illegible] published in Cairo in four volumes (1290AH), but has never been translated into English.
18. This verse expresses [illegible] traditional theme in the ancient Arabic *qasîdah* [illegible] ode. It [illegible] customary for the poet in the opening section, the *nasîb* or love-prelude, to describe [illegible] visit to [illegible] abandoned encampment, where he would [illegible] his beloved and her clan.

19. Green is considered the colour of Islam, and death here means 'dying to the world'. The robes and turbans of Sufis often green.
20. One of great Sufi (d. 298/910), born in Nihawand in Iran, who settled in Baghdad. He a disciple of Sari Saqati and stressed the need for sobriety.
21. Abu'l-Fayd Thawban ibn (d. 245/859), surnamed Dhu'l-Nun ('he of the fish'), born of Nubian parents in Ikhmim in Upper Egypt, and to Damascus. Many miracles ascribed to him, he subject of numerous tales and legends. The chain of transmission for this saying is as follows: Abu Muhammad ibn Yahya, Abu Bakr ibn Abi Mansur, Abu'l-Fadl Ahmad, Ahmad ibn 'Abd Allah, Abu'l-Husayn Ahmad ibn Muhammad Muqsim, 'Abbas ibn Yusuf al-Shakali, Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Malik.
22. Among the Friends of God, are, according to Ibn 'Arabi, *Abdâl* or Substitutes, one for each of the seven climes (William C. Chittick, *The Sufi Path of Knowledge*, State Univ. of New York, Albany, 1989, p. 370; cf. Henry Corbin, *Temple and Contemplation*, Philip Sherrard, KPI, London, 1986, pp. 65 71 for Haydar Amuli's commentary on Ibn 'Arabi. also *La Parure Abdal*, trans. Michel Valsan, Paris, 1992.) Above the *Abdâl*, in the spiritual hierarchy, four *Awtâd* (Supports) and the *Qutb* or Pole.
23. The term *al-ghayb* is found in the Qur'an (2:3), where it is stated that this divine scripture offers guidance to those who believe in the Unseen – all that which beyond the of normal human perception and cannot, therefore, proved disproved by scientific observation.
24. As far as I know, this work of Ibn 'Arabi has not been edited. Six MSS listed in C. Brockelmann, *Geschichte der Arabischen Litteratur* (G 1, p. 446, no. 94; S 1, p. 798, no. 94). The full title is: *Bughiyat al-khawâss fî l-ikhwân ma'din al-ikhlâs fî ma'rifat al-insân*.
25. Dr al-Tayyib suggests there is an allusion here from the Qur'an: 'And if you pray to them for guidance, they do hear; and though you them looking you, they do not see' (7:198). This refers to idols to whom idolaters appeal for help. 'Arabi implies pseudo-Sufis are lifeless, blind and hard-hearted.
26. The night journey another traditional topic of the *qasîdah*. The amorous poet would describe riding night to distract his grief. As so often in Ibn 'Arabi, language associated with human passion is used in a mystical context.
27. The chain of transmission is follows: Abu'l-Hasan 'Ali ibn Musa, Muhammad ibn 'Abd Allah, Sa'd ibn 'Abd Allah, ibn Ahmad, Ahmad Allah, from his father, from Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn Misqalah, Abu 'Uthman al-Khayat, Abu'l-Fayd Dhu'l-Nun ibn Ibrahim al-Misri, who is, as you know my friend, one of our
28. Shu'ayb Husayn Abu Madyan of Bugia (d. 594/1197–8) was considered the spiritual Pole (*Qutb*) of his time. He was born in Cantillana Seville and studied in Fez; his tomb is in Tlemcen. He initiated by 'Abd al-Qadir al-Jilani in Ibn 'Arabi often refers him 'my Shaykh', although actually him. In this respect, may perceive a parallel between their relationship and that of the Prophet and Uways al-Qarani. Elsewhere in the *al-Quds*, Ibn 'Arabi recounts how one evening, after praying the sunset prayer in his house in Seville, man named Abu Imran,

of the seven Substitutes, appeared, saying that he just completed the sunset prayer Bugia in Algeria with Abu Madyan. The latter had said: 'Tell al-'Arabi that as for our meeting together in the spirit, well and good, but as for our meeting in the flesh in this world, God will not permit it. Let him however rest assured, for time appointed as meeting for him lies in security of God's mercy' (trans. R.W.J. Austin, *Sufis of Andalusia*, p. 121).

29. The verb *na'qa*, which is hard to translate, occurs in the Qur'an. As Muhammad Asad in one of his learned footnotes, it is generally used to describe the inarticulate cry with which a shepherd drives his flock. 'And the parable of those who disbelieve is as that of the beast which hears the shepherd's cry, and hears in it nothing but d of a voice a call (lit: one who calls to that which no than a call and a cry). are they, and dumb, and blind: for they do their reason' (2:171). This whole Quranic admonishmankind not to 'follow Satan's footsteps' (2:168).
30. J. Spencer Trimingham writes: 'The lawfulness of music as an aid Sufi devotions was under discussion in legal and Sufi circles long before the formation of definite orders' (*The Sufi Orders in Islam*, OUP, London, Oxford and New York, 1971, p. 195). Ibn 'Arabi's outright condemnation of 'audition' is unexpected. According to al-Ghazali, in *The Alchemy of Happiness*, music may enable a Sufi to obtain spiritual visions and ecstasies and attain 'a degree of purity which could be attained by any amount of outward austerities' (trans. Claud Field, Muhammad Ashraf, Lahore, 1964, p. 77). it is generally agreed by Sufi authorities that music dancing will only fan into a flame tions already dormant, be they sensual or spiritual. Al-Hujwiri cites a saying effect by Dhu'l-Nun (*Kashf*, p. 404). Both al-Hujwiri and Ibn 'Arabi use al-Qushayri in their denunciation of the misuse of *samā'*: 'But in the present persons attend meetings where the wicked listen music, yet they say, "We listening to God" . . . Others of the elect argue that . . . its pleasure consists in gratification of desire, and this is mere child's play' (*Kashf*, pp. 409, 413).
31. The first orthodox caliph (ruled 632–4) and the Prophet's close friend. daughter 'Aishah was the Prophet's favourite wife, she is the source of many sayings and anecdotes.
32. Labid ibn Rabi'ah (d. *ca.* 41/661) was a celebrated poet and a contemporary of the Prophet. is said that he embraced Islam in the year 9/630–1, when he accompanied a delegation of his tribe to Medina. The Prophet is reported to have said: 'The word spoken by the Arabs is the of Labid, "Is not everything other than God unreal (*bātil*)?" ' Ibn 'Arabi wishes to make the point even in the Prophet's lifetime people looked with nostalgia to better age when the of Islam first proclaimed. The concept of progress is utterly alien to Islam, since history is regarded as a process of decline from the first generation of Muslims.
33. *anfs al-munqati'īn*. The author is certainly Abu'l-Mughith al-Husayn ibn Mansur al-Hallaj (see Note below). But it is listed in the catalogue of forty-six works by al-Hallaj given by Ibn al-Nadim (Louis Massignon, *La Passion d'Al-Hallaj*, Paul Geuthner, Paris, 1922, II, pp. 816–22). A work of this title is found in Brockelmann (II, pp. 909, 1007), but it is ascribed ibn al-Husayn ibn Abu'l-Fath. The young man in this is

perhaps al-Khidr, the immortal guide of souls. In *al-Futûhât al-Makkiyyah* (Cairo, 1329AH, I, p. 186), Ibn 'Arabi describes how, when he [illegible] boat in the port of Tunis, al-Khidr approached him by walking [illegible] the surface of the [illegible] See Austin, *Sufis of Andalusia*, p. 27.

34. [illegible] ibn al-Aratt [illegible] one of [illegible] first [illegible] to Islam. He used to recite the Qur'an to Fatimah, the sister of 'Umar al-Khattab, and her husband [illegible] before 'Umar's conversion.
35. See Note 18 above.
36. 'Abd [illegible] Mas'ud (d. 32–33AH), one of the early Companions of the Prophet, with [illegible] deep knowledge of the Qur'an and the Sunnah (customs of the Prophet), mentioned as an authority for 848 traditions. Many verses in the Qur'an begin in this manner.
37. The chain of transmission is [illegible] follows: Abu [illegible] [illegible] ibn Ahmad, al-Hasan ibn Muhammad, 'Ubayd [illegible] ibn 'Abd al-Karim, Sa'id ibn Asyad ibn Musa, Durma ibn Rabi'ah, Asbagh [illegible] Zayd.
38. [illegible] Abu Yazid (Bayezid) Tayfur ibn 'Isa al-Bistami (d. 261/874), from Bastam [illegible] north-western Iran, was renowned for his extravagant and perplexing utterances.
39. Al-Hallaj (d. 309/922), from Fars in southern Iran, a disciple of 'Amr al-Makki, who travelled as far as India. This mystic, intoxicated by divine love, [illegible] brutally executed [illegible] heretic in Baghdad. Opinions with regard to [illegible] [illegible] greatly divided. [illegible] life [illegible] been thoroughly researched by Louis Massignon.
40. In the Qur'an this is the first category of persons in the list of those to whom one should give in charity: 'truly pious is he who . . . spends his substance out of love for Him on his near of kin, and the orphans. and the needy, and the wayfarer, and the beggars, and for the freeing of human beings from bondage' (2:177).
41. See Note 10 above. The 'soft breezes' evoke the quality of God's mercy. Alluding to Uways, it is reported that the Prophet said: 'The breath of the Merciful (*nafas al-Rahmân*) comes to me from Yemen.'
42. The chain of transmission is as follows: Abu Muhammad ibn Yahya, Abu Bakr ibn Abi Mansur, Abu'l-Fadl ibn Ahmad, Abu Ahmad ibn 'Abd Allah, from his father, from Hamid ibn Muhammad, Salmah ibn Shabib, Abu'l-Walid ibn Isma'il al-Harrani, Muhammad ibn Ibrahim, 'Ubayd, Muhammad ibn Yazid, Nawfil ibn 'Abd Allah, al-Dahhak ibn Muzahim, Abu Hurayrah. This [illegible] [illegible] to contradict the generally accepted opinion that Uways never [illegible] the Prophet. Indeed Uways told Harim ibn Hayyan, according to the latter's testimony (cited below), 'I [illegible] not live to [illegible] the Prophet.' There [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] apparent inconsistency in the narrative: Abu Hurayrah reports [illegible] [illegible] was alone with the Prophet when Uways appeared; yet after [illegible] speech addressed to Abu Hurayrah by the Prophet concerning 'the people of paradise', the Companions ask how such people [illegible] be recognized. Either the Companions had returned to the mosque, [illegible] else two [illegible] have here been conflated. The second [illegible] (or the second part of the *hadith*), in which the Prophet urges 'Umar and 'Ali to look for Uways and the [illegible] of [illegible] meeting which took place ten years later is well known. Maulana Fazlul Karim, in [illegible] edition of the *Mishkat-ul-Masabih* (Law Publishing Company, Lahore, n.d., IV, pp. 601–2), cites only two *ahâdith*, collected by Muslims and reported by 'Umar ibn al-Khattab: 'Verily a [illegible] will come to [illegible] from Yemen. [illegible] [illegible] called Uways. [illegible] does [illegible] leave Yemen without his mother. There [illegible] leprosy on him. [illegible] invoked Allah and so He removed it,

except for the space of one dinar. If any [redacted] of you should [redacted] him, let him [redacted] forgiveness for you'; and: 'The [redacted] of [redacted] is [redacted] man [redacted] Uways. He has [redacted] mother, and there is leprosy [redacted] him. Pass by him and let him seek forgiveness for you.' Ibn 'Arabi does not mention leprosy, and al-Hujwiri refutes this suggestion in the *hadith* (addressed to 'Umar and 'Ali) which he cites: 'He is a lowly [redacted] of middle height, and hairy; on [redacted] left side there is a white spot, [redacted] large as [redacted] dirhem, which is [redacted] from leprosy (*pisi*), [redacted] he has [redacted] similar spot [redacted] the palm of his hand. When you see him, give him my greeting, [redacted] [redacted] him pray for my people' (*Kashf*, p. 83).

43. In the [redacted] section of *Ihyâ' 'Ulûm al-Dîn*, in [redacted] chapter on intercession, al-Ghazali cites this short *hadith*: 'By virtue of the intercession of a man of my community a host greater than that of Rabi'a and Mudar shall enter Heaven' (*Al-Ghazali, The Remembrance of Death*, trans. T.J. Winter, Islamic Texts, Cambridge 1989), p. 215). Winter notes that this man was, according to Ibn Hanbal, either 'Uthman ibn 'Affan or Uways al-Qarani. Rabi'ah and Mudar [redacted] the [redacted] of two large tribes. Al-Hujwiri gives [redacted] slightly different version of this [redacted] 'There is [redacted] man at Qaran, called Uways, who [redacted] the Resurrection will intercede for [redacted] multitude of my people, as many [redacted] the sheep of [redacted] and Mudar' (*Kashf*, p. 83).
44. A day of prayer [redacted] 'Arafat, the Mount of Mercy. is [redacted] essential part of the pilgrimage or *hajj*.
45. Al-Mughirah ibn Shu'bah [redacted] [redacted] of the Prophet's Companions who emigrated with him from Mecca to Medina.
46. There are conflicting accounts of his death. Some say [redacted] died in battle [redacted] Nihawand (641CE), others that he died fighting for 'Ali [redacted] Siffin (657CE).
47. Qur'an, 22:62; 17:108.
48. The first to memorize and transmit the Prophet's sayings [redacted] been his Companions. The Prophet warned [redacted] if [redacted] person attributed to him words that [redacted] [redacted] [redacted] uttered, he or she would be doomed to sit in hell. Given the isolation of Uways, [redacted] can understand his reluctance to [redacted] Prophetic sayings.
49. Qur'an, 44:40–41.
50. The chain of transmission is as follows: Ahmad al-Shahid, Muhammad ibn 'Abd Allah ibn Muhammad [redacted] Ja'far, Muhammad ibn al-Abbas ibn Ayyub, Jahjah ibn Muhammad ibn Sakkan, Yahya ibn Kuthayr, al-Haytham ibn Hurmuz, Humran, Salman al-Yutmi, Aslam al-'Ujli, al-Dahhak al-Jurmi, Harim ibn Hayyan.
51. Qur'an, 28:60 (*cf.* 42:36). These hypocritical scholars are guilty of quoting [redacted] of [redacted] because they omit the words [redacted] follow: 'whereas that which is with God is far better and more enduring.'
52. His father, Zayd ibn Harithah, [redacted] the adopted son of the Prophet [redacted] [redacted] former slave. Therefore the Prophet was very fond of him [redacted] treated him as if he [redacted] his grandson. While still [redacted] youth in 11AH, he [redacted] placed in command of a military expedition to Syria [redacted] avenge [redacted] death of his father [redacted] Mu'tah. The expedition turned back [redacted] the [redacted] of the Prophet's death, but Abu Bakr, the newly-elected Caliph, ordered that it should be resumed and the campaign was successful.
53. Cf. 'And by Him in Whose hand is my soul, the odour of [redacted] mouth of one fasting is sweeter in the estimation of Allah than the odour of musk – he gives

up his food and his drink and his (sexual) desire for My sake.' See Maulana [redacted] Ali, *A Manual of Hadith*, 2nd edn, (Curzon Press, London and Dublin, 1978), p. 223.

54. There were many similar *ahâdith* concerning the future and the events preceding the [redacted] Hour.
55. Uways, for example, [redacted] considered mad by the people of Yemen. [redacted] 'Umar [redacted] the pilgrims who [redacted] [redacted] to [redacted] from Qaran whether they knew Uways, they said: 'He is a [redacted] who dwells in solitude and associates with [redacted] one. He does not eat what men eat, and he feels [redacted] joy or sorrow. When others smile, [redacted] weeps, and when others weep, he smiles' (al-Hujwiri, *Kashf*, p. 83).
56. Sayf ibn Dhi Yazan was a pre-Islamic Yemenite king renowned for his power and luxury.
57. The personal [redacted] of [redacted] Devil.
58. *Rafiqi* (a variant is *raqibi*, my guardian) personifies *al-nafs al-lawwâmah*, 'the blaming soul' [redacted] conscience.
59. This alludes to a *hadith* cited [redacted] least twice in the *Futûhât*: 'When [redacted] [redacted] to [redacted] running, I come to him rushing' (Chittick, *Sufi Path*, pp. 111, 249).
60. Qur'an, 33:53.
61. 'Abd Allah Badr al-Habashi [redacted] Ibn 'Arabi's disciple and companion for twenty-three years. He died while Ibn 'Arabi was with him in Malatya in Anatolia. A great light reaching [redacted] the sky was [redacted] over his [redacted] [redacted] night (Austin, *Sufis of Andalusia*, p. 158). It was to him that Ibn 'Arabi dedicated [redacted] *Futûhât*.
62. Ibn 'Arabi describes him [redacted] a [redacted] 'dedicated to the Qur'an [redacted] [redacted] worship by night' (ibid., p. 140).
63. He [redacted] al-Mahdawi's servant. When Ibn 'Arabi visited al-Mahdawi in 598AH on his way to perform the pilgrimage, 'Abd al-Jabbar copied the section of *Inshâ' ad-Dawâ'ir wa'l-Jadâwil* which Ibn 'Arabi [redacted] completed there (ibid., p. 36).
64. Ibn 'Arabi describes him [redacted] 'a blameless [redacted] who spoke the truth without fear.' [redacted] frequently exposed himself to the danger of execution by rebuking the sultans for their misdeeds. He criticized Ibn 'Arabi's father for [redacted] renouncing public office, telling him to take [redacted] lesson from his son: 'Here is [redacted] young man with [redacted] [redacted] bodily appetites in full bloom, who [redacted] nevertheless subdued [redacted] lusts, [redacted] out [redacted] devil, turned to God and associates with God's people, while you, an old [redacted] are on the brink of the abyss' (ibid., pp. 112–14).
65. The Black Stone is built into the wall of the [redacted] or House of God in Mecca. It is about twelve inches in diameter, and is described [redacted] lava [redacted] basalt. Its surface [redacted] [redacted] smooth by touching and kissing, for pilgrims believe [redacted] it [redacted] [redacted] special aura of sanctity [redacted] *barakah*. It is perhaps a [redacted] meteorite.

How to Study the *Futûhât*: Ibn 'Arabi's Own Advice

JAMES WINSTON MORRIS

It is no [redacted] for those who have spent any [redacted] of time with the works of Ibn 'Arabi, [redacted] with such relatively 'simple' and straightforward texts [redacted] the hagiographical vignettes translated in *Sufis of Andalusia*, that [redacted] of his writings [redacted] [redacted] to function as a sort of spiritual mirror, reflecting and revealing the inner intentions, assumptions and predilections of each reader with profound – and sometimes embarrassing – clarity. And nowhere is that mirroring (or refractive?) function clearer than in the immense secondary literature attempting [redacted] explain or otherwise convey the voluminous teachings of this 'Greatest Master' (*al-shaykh al-akbar*), beginning with the contrasting approaches of [redacted] own close disciples and continuing down to our own day.

For if virtually all Sufi writings are [redacted] to [redacted] mirrors, Ibn 'Arabi's works are mirrors of [redacted] very peculiar and in some ways utterly unique sort. The novel and highly personal [redacted] in which he integrally combined the contrasting approaches of earlier Islamic intellectual traditions that had focused respectively on spiritual disciplines and contemplation, intellectual and scientific inquiry, and the elaboration of scriptural and prophetic teachings – the tripartite scheme of *kashf* (unveiling), *'aql* (intellect), *naql* (religious tradition) found in virtually all his later commentators – [redacted] never really repeated or adequately imitated by any subsequent Islamic author. Instead his readers [redacted] commentators, whether ancient [redacted] contemporary, Muslim or non-Muslim, have almost inevitably tended [redacted] focus their attention [redacted] [redacted] or two of those perspectives.[1] The typical result – and indeed the underlying method – in such [redacted] has been to separate the 'content' from the 'form' of the Shaykh's teachings in ways that tend to ignore and indeed render invisible that remarkably effective spiritual pedagogy which is in fact the unifying [redacted] and persistent focus of his many rhetorical styles and techniques.

One symptom of that neglect is the lack of any detailed study of the complex Introduction (*muqaddima*) to Ibn 'Arabi's famous 'Meccan Illuminations' (*al-Futûhât al-Makkîya*), in which [redacted] has provided [redacted] essential keys to his underlying intentions and rhetorical methods throughout that notoriously difficult work. Now that extended translations of major sections from the *Futûhât* [redacted] beginning to become available,[2] it [redacted] [redacted] especially helpful to present these [redacted] in

which the Shaykh gives perhaps his [redacted] complete discussion and explanation of the many different audiences and types of readers for whom he composed that work. While his reflections here [redacted] obviously relevant to understanding all of his writings (including the better-known *Fusûs al-Hikam*) – and indeed to the study of mystical literature and spiritual pedagogy more generally – they are indispensable for anyone wishing to decipher and integrate the phenomenal diversity and sheer volume of earlier Islamic traditions brought together in the *Futûhât*.

In particular, this Introduction helps to highlight the remarkably active approach which Ibn 'Arabi expects and constantly demands of his truly qualified and spiritually 'ambitious' readers, those who begin to interact with his work with the appropriate intentions and preparation (*himma*). And his writing, as [redacted] can readily see, is consciously constructed in such [redacted] way that readers without that essential preparation are likely to become quickly discouraged or bored, and hence turn to other, more interesting [redacted]

To begin with, the Shaykh's rhetoric intentionally forces his readers to situate themselves – in relation to the text – in at least two ordinarily separate dimensions at the same time: the intellectual, discursive, ostensibly 'objective' dimension (what he calls *nazar*) by which the mind can attempt to piece together the many different theoretical disciplines juxtaposed in the *Futûhât* and then somehow relate them all to the external cosmos and social world; and the inner, experiential, inevitably highly personal spiritual dimension (of *ahwâl* and *asrâr*) within which each serious reader must confront and act upon (rather than 'understand') the inspirations, exhortations and paradoxes which Ibn 'Arabi repeatedly brings to their attention. It is easy enough to retreat from that confrontation, whether by closing (or even burning or banning!)[3] the book itself or by 'interpreting' it on only the first of those levels. [redacted]

Ibn 'Arabi stresses throughout his Introduction, the tension carefully generated by the constantly varied confrontation of those two dimensions is actually [redacted] to [redacted] the properly prepared reader through a spiral of higher and higher levels of participation and engagement, from conceptual understanding and analysis to the very different plane of spiritual knowing, returning to those mysterious 'Openings' which [redacted] the source and aim of this and all his writings.

Limitations of space do not permit a more extensive commentary [redacted] the key sections of the Introduction translated here.[4] But those who take the time to re-read and reflect on that text will themselves provide the only commentary that Ibn 'Arabi would have considered valuable.

In order to help situate the Introduction and its various subdivisions within the opening sections of the *Futûhât*, [redacted] have provided the following simplified outline:[5]

1. Opening Address (*khutbat al-kitâb*)[6] Pages 41–58
2. Poetic 'Letter'[7] Pages 59–73
3. Table of Chapter Headings (*fihrist*) Pages 75–137
4. Introduction (*muqaddimat al-kitâb*)[8] Pages 138–214
   (a) (The three levels of knowledge) 138–144
   (b) 'Continuation': (How [redacted] approach the 'knowledge of secrets') 145–53
   (c) 'Supplement': (Dangers of *kalâm* and importance of relying [redacted] Qur'an) 154–61
   (d) 'Continuation': The Credo of the [redacted] and People of Submission [redacted] *Taqlîd*[9] 162–72
   (e) (The Three Credos in Relation to the Inner Meaning of the *Futûhât*: 'Credo of the Quintessence of the Elite') 173
   (f) 'Continuation': '. . . Beliefs of the People of External Forms' 174–86
   [redacted] 'Continuation': '. . . Belief of [redacted] Elite Among the People of God, Between (Discursive) Inquiry and Unveiling' 187–214

The following translation of selected [redacted] from Ibn 'Arabi's Introduction includes almost all of part 4(a) in the above outline, much of 4(b) and 4(c), and several key sections from the remaining 'credos' in the concluding parts of the Introduction.

[redacted] In the [redacted] of God, the Merciful, [redacted] Compassionate

INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK
(*FUTUHAT AL-MAKKIYA*)

[redacted] said: From time [redacted] time it occurred [redacted] [redacted] that I should place [redacted] the very beginning of this book a chapter concerning (theological) creeds,[10] supported by definitive arguments and salient proofs. But then I realized that that would (only) distract the person who is properly prepared and seeking an increase (in spiritual knowledge), who is receptive to the fragrant breaths of (divine) Bounty through the [redacted] of being. For if [redacted] properly prepared person persists in *dhikr* [redacted] spiritual retreat, emptying the place (of the heart) of thinking, and sitting like [redacted] poor beggar who has nothing, [redacted] the doorstep of their Lord – then God will bestow upon them and give them [redacted] of [redacted] knowledge of Him, of those divine [redacted] [redacted] supernal understandings, which He granted [redacted]

His servant Khadir.[11] For [redacted] said: 'A servant [redacted] servants [redacted] whom We have brought Mercy from Us and to whom We have given Knowledge from what is with Us' (18:65). And [redacted] said: 'So be aware of God, and God will teach you' (2:282); and, 'If you are aware of God, He will give you a criterion (of spiritual discernment: *furqân*); and 'He will give you a light by which you will walk' (57:28).[12]

[139] Someone said to [the famous Sufi] al-Junayd: 'How did you attain what you've attained?' 'By sitting under that step for thirty years', [redacted] replied. And Abu Yazid (al-Bistami) said: 'You all took your knowledge like [redacted] dead person (receiving it) from another dead person. But [redacted] took our knowledge from the Living One who never dies (25:58)!'[13] So the person with concentrated spiritual intention (*himma*) during their [redacted] with God may realize through Him – how exalted are [redacted] gifts and how prodigious His grace! – (forms of spiritual) knowledge that are concealed from every theologian (*mutakallim*) [redacted] face of the earth, and indeed from anyone relying [redacted] (intellectual) inquiry (*nazar*) and proofs who lacks that spiritual state. For such knowledge is beyond (the grasp of) inquiry with the intellect.

For there are three levels of knowledge. Knowledge through the intellect (*'ilm al-'aql*) is whatever knowledge you obtain either immediately[14] or [redacted] a result of inquiry concerning [redacted] 'sign',[15] provided that you discover the probative aspect of that sign. And mistakes with regard to this kind of knowledge (come about) in the realm of that thinking[16] which is linked together and typifies this type of knowledge. That is why they say about (intellectual) inquiry that some of it is sound and some is invalid.

The second (level of) knowledge is the knowledge of 'states'.[17] The only way to that is through immediate experience: it can't be defined intellectually, and no (conceptual) proof can ever establish that knowing. (It includes things) like knowledge of the sweetness of honey, the bitterness of aloes, the pleasure of intercourse, love, ecstasy, [redacted] passionate longing, and other examples of this sort of knowledge. It is impossible for [redacted] know this kind of knowledge without directly experiencing it and participating in it. So (what are termed) 'mistakes' with regard to this kind of knowledge, among those who have immediate experience, [redacted] really such. (For example, in the case of) someone whose organs of taste are overcome by yellow bile, so that they find honey bitter-tasting, what actually touches the organs of [redacted] *is* the yellow bile (and [redacted] the honey).

[140] The third (level of) knowledge is knowledge of (divine) secrets:[18] this is the knowledge that is beyond the stage of the intellect. It is knowledge of 'the inbreathing of the Holy Spirit in the heart,'[19] and it is peculiar to prophets and saints.

This (inspired) knowledge is of two kinds. One kind is perceived by the intellect, just like the first (category of discursive) knowledge, except that

the person who knows in this (inspired) way doesn't acquire their knowledge through inquiry. Instead, the level of this knowledge bestows it upon them.

The second kind (of inspired knowledge) is of two sorts. The first sort is connected with the second (level of) knowledge [i.e. of 'states'], except that this knower's state [illegible] more exalted. And the other sort is knowledge through (spiritual) 'informing'.[20] Now things known in this way [illegible] either [illegible] false, unless the person being informed [illegible] already [illegible] firmed the truthfulness of their source and its infallibility with regard to what it is communicating – [illegible] with the prophets' being informed by God, such as their being informed about the Garden (of paradise) and what is in it.

Therefore (to illustrate these three sorts of inspired 'knowledge of secrets'), the Prophet's saying that [illegible] Garden actually exists [illegible] knowledge through being informed (by God). His saying with regard to the (Day of) Resurrection that 'there is a Pool in it sweeter than honey' is (an example of) knowledge of states, which is knowledge by direct experience; and his saying that 'God was, and nothing [illegible] with him' and things like that are (illustrations of immediate) intellective knowing (corresponding to discursive knowledge) perceived through inquiry.

[illegible] as for this third type (of inspired knowing), which is the 'knowledge of secrets', the person who knows it knows *all* knowledge and is completely immersed in it[21] – while the person who has those other (two lower levels of) knowledge is not like that. Hence there is no knowledge nobler than this 'all-encompassing knowledge'[22] which embraces the entirety of knowable things!

So the only remaining point is that the person reporting (this sort of knowledge) [illegible] be considered truthful and infallible [illegible] by those listening to them. Or rather this is (taken to be) [illegible] precondition by the common people.[24]

But as for truly intelligent and sensible people, who follow their own good counsel, they don't reject someone reporting (such inspired knowledge). [141] Instead they say: 'In my opinion [illegible] is possible that this person may [illegible] speaking truthfully [illegible] not.' And that is how every intelligent person ought to behave whenever someone who's not infallible [illegible] to them with this sort of (inspired spiritual) knowledge, as long as they're speaking truthfully concerning the matter about which they've been informed. . . . For giving credence to such [illegible] person will not harm you, [illegible] long [illegible] what they are reporting is [illegible] rationally impossible . . . and so long as it doesn't undermine [illegible] of the pillars of the Sharia and doesn't contradict [illegible] of its essential principles.[23] Therefore if [illegible] brings something (which they've spiritually experienced) that is rationally conceivable and about which [illegible] giver of the [illegible] was silent, [illegible] mustn't [illegible] all reject it, but [illegible] instead free to choose [illegible] accept it. . . . [illegible]

And I am the [illegible] worthy of those who follow their [illegible] good counsel

with regard to this. For if this person [redacted] only informing us about something (already) brought by the infallible (prophet) – only recounting to [redacted] what [redacted] already [redacted] from that (prophet) through another account[27] – then their report wouldn't give [redacted] anything beneficial beyond what [redacted] already have. [redacted] the (saints)[28] – may God be pleased with them – *only* bring secrets and wise points concerning the secrets of the Sharia concerning that which is *beyond* the power of thinking and acquisition (of traditional reports), secrets which [redacted] never ever attained in any way *except* [142] through direct witnessing and (divinely given) confirmation and other paths like those. This is the beneficial point [redacted] (Muhammad's) saying: '[Among the communities who [redacted] before you there [redacted] "those who are spoken to" (by God),[29] although they [redacted] not prophets, and] if there are "those who [redacted] spoken to" in my community, 'Umar is among them'. . . .

For if people [redacted] not tend [redacted] deny the very existence of this kind of (spiritual) knowledge, there would have been no point to Abû Hurayra's[30] saying: 'I have committed to memory two vessels (of teachings) from the Messenger of God: One of them I have widely disseminated; but as for the other, if I had disseminated it this throat of mine would have been cut!'[31]

[143] . . . Nor [if people did not often deny such inspired knowledge] would there have been any need for the saying of Ibn 'Abbas, when [redacted] said in regard to God's saying 'God it is Who created the [redacted] heavens, and of the earth like them; the (divine) Command descends through them' (65:12)[32]: 'If I were to mention the (Prophet's) interpretation of this verse you would stone me!' Or according to another version: 'You would say I [redacted] an unbeliever!' . . .[33]

[144] And (were it not for people's ordinarily denying the existence of such spiritual inspiration), the saying of al-Radi, one of the descendants of 'Ali ibn Abi Talib – may God's blessings and peace be upon him[34] – would have been meaningless, when he said:

> How many a precious [redacted] of knowledge, if I divulged it –
> They'd say to [redacted] 'You're with those who worship idols!'
> The men of the Muslims would judge killing me licit;
> They'd consider the worst of what they do to [redacted] good.

Now all of these outstanding and righteous gentlemen, in my [redacted] judge-[redacted] and [redacted] is widely known, *did* acknowledge this (inspired spiritual) knowledge and its rank, [redacted] well as the position of [redacted] people in the world with respect to it and the fact that [redacted] of them deny its existence. Therefore it is incumbent [redacted] the intelligent, truly knowing person [redacted] to reproach them for denying it. For in the story of Moses with Khadir (in the *Sûrah of the Cave*) allowance is made for them, and there is an argu-[redacted] for both sides. . . . And it is precisely with this story that [redacted] would argue against those who deny (the existence of this 'knowledge of

secrets'), although it does [redacted] permit us [redacted] quarrel with them.[35] [redacted] say, as the 'upright servant' (Khadir) [redacted] (to Moses): 'This [redacted] parting between [redacted] and you!'(18:77).

[145] Continuation[36]

And don't [redacted] yourself [redacted] fooled, you who are inquiring into this type of (inspired) knowledge (of divine 'secrets') which is the prophetic knowledge inherited from them,[37] if you [redacted] come [redacted] [redacted] or another of their topics which was also mentioned by a philosopher, [redacted] theologian or (rational) inquirer [redacted] any other science – [redacted] that you say about this speaker, who is the realized Sufi,[38] that he is (for example) [redacted] philosopher, because the philosopher (also) mentioned that topic [redacted] professed and believed it, so that he (must have) transmitted it from them. . . . [Ibn 'Arabi – clearly alluding to his own experiences in [redacted] regard – [redacted] on to defend this accomplished Sufi against the [redacted] tions of 'irreligion' popularly associated with the philosophers, and [redacted] tinues by pointing out that philosophic teachings in the areas of [redacted] discipline, in particular, closely mirror the prophetic teachings [redacted] standpoints of Islamic religious sciences].[39]

[146.8] Don't you see that if someone brought you (these inspirations) [redacted] if they [redacted] [redacted] dream he'd [redacted] – wouldn't you try to interpret them and figure out what they really mean? So likewise, take whatever this Sufi brings you and let yourself be rightly guided by it for a little while. And open up the place of your (heart) for what he's brought you, so that their inner meanings can become manifest to you. That is better for you than if you had to say [redacted] [redacted] Day of the Rising: (When the True Promise draws near . . .) 'But [redacted] were heedless of this, indeed we [redacted] doing wrong!' (21:97).

Now any knowledge whose meaning [redacted] be easily understood once it [redacted] been clearly explained, [redacted] which is easily accessible, without difficulty, to the quick-witted learner, belongs to (the lowest level of) knowledge (attained by) [redacted] inquiring (discursive) intellect, because it [redacted] under its domain and includes what can be grasped independently by [redacted] if they should inquire (about it).

But the 'knowledge of secrets' isn't [redacted] that. For when the (rational) interpretive faculty takes it up it becomes disagreeable, difficult [redacted] trying for the understanding [147] [redacted] grasp. And sometimes weak [redacted] fanatic minds, those which haven't been successful in properly employing [redacted] reality of the intellect God [redacted] them for inquiry and investigation, even spit [redacted] that knowledge! So this [redacted] why those who [redacted] this (inspired) knowledge [redacted] often make it more approachable for (most people's) understanding by using symbolic images and poetic forms of speech.

And for the 'knowledge of states', that is between this knowledge of secrets and knowledge (gained by) intellects. Most of those who have faith in knowledge of states are people who rely on their own experiences (*ahl al-tajârib*). And the knowledge of is closer to the knowledge of than it is to the intellective knowledge gained by inquiry. . . .[40]

Therefore you should know that if this (kind of report concerning spiritual knowledge) seems good you, and you accept have faith in it – then rejoice (in your good fortune)! For you necessarily in of immediate 'unveiling' (*kashf*) concerning that, if you aren't of it. There's no other way: for heart is not gladdened except by what it knows for to true. And the intellect can't enter in here, because this knowledge is not within its grasp – unless infallible (prophet) brings this information, in which the heart of the intellectual person may be gladdened. But if (this knowledge is brought by) not (known to be) infallible, then the *only* one who will take pleasure in what they say is the person relying on immediate (spiritual) experience (*sâhib al-dhawq*).

[The of this section, pp. 148–53, is devoted to Ibn 'Arabi's extremely abbreviated reply to the request to 'summarize this path which you claim to be the noble path leading the voyager on it to God', reply which includes his initial outline of the spiritual states, waystations and stages discussed profusely throughout later chapters of the *Futûhât*. concludes, on p. 153, by referring ahead to his far extensive discussion in chapter 177 of the types of 'fundamental knowledge which is peculiar to the people of God'.][41]

[154] Supplement[42]

Next let's return to the reason for which forbade the person properly prepared receive God's Self-manifestation in their heart[43] from inquiring about the truth or falsehood of credal beliefs by of the science of *kalâm* (dialectical theology). Part of that (reason) is that the ordinary people (*al-'awwâm*) have sound credal beliefs, not differing from any sound-minded person following the Sharia, and are (practising) Muslims despite their having studied anything at all from Kalam theology and not knowing anything about the disputing (theological) schools. God has preserved them the soundness of their primordial (*al-fitra*), which is their knowledge of the existence of God, through the instruction of parent or early teacher following the Sharia. As far as their understanding of God (*al-Haqq*) and His incomparability (*tanzîh*), they in the state of the understanding and (comprehension of) transcendence that is given in the outer aspect (*zâhir*) of

the Clear Qur'an. And they [illegible] in [illegible] healthy and correct (state) [illegible] long as [illegible] of them seeks to go off into (their [illegible] personal) interpretation: whenever anyone goes off seeking (such) interpretation, they're no longer part of the [illegible] (*al-'âmma*) . . . For the credal beliefs of the masses [illegible] sound because, [illegible] [155] we've mentioned, they take them from the outer aspect of the Precious [illegible] in [illegible] way that leads to assurance. . . .

So if things are as we've just stated, the properly prepared person should take their credo from the Precious Qur'an.[44] It will [illegible] (for them) like [illegible] rational premise in [illegible] (theological) argument, since [illegible] is the Veracious Saying that 'untruth cannot approach from in front [illegible] from behind, sent down from the Most-Wise, the Most-Praised' (41:42). So the properly prepared person, who has confirmed this Source, doesn't [illegible] intellectual arguments, since they've realized the Decisive Sign!

[Ibn 'Arabi, closely following the influential critical remarks of al-Ghazali, goes on to explain his [illegible] conviction that the only religiously valid purpose for *kalâm* is 'to confirm the knowledge of God in the souls' of the small set of intellectuals who might otherwise be led astray by opposing arguments. He is especially vehement in denying any claims that a particular theological understanding or formulation of religious beliefs might be *necessary* for knowing God. The drastically limited usefulness of the *kalâm* schools, from that perspective, is underlined in his later remark (at p. 161.8) that: 'The science of *kalâm*, despite its dignity, is not needed at [illegible] by most people; indeed a single theologian is enough for one country.']

[157.14] So if an individual has faith that the Qur'an is God's Speech, [illegible] is absolutely assured of that, let them take their credo from the Qur'an itself, without any (personal) interpretation or bias. . . .[45]

[162] Continuation

Including What Ought [illegible] be Generally Believed: It is the Credo of the People [illegible] (Outward) [illegible] Accepted Without Any Inquiring [illegible] Arguments or Proofs[46]

[The contents of this section, divided according to the two parts of the Islamic testimony of faith (*shahâda*), are largely [illegible] extension and amplification of the basic Quranic affirmations concerning the [illegible] of God, Creation, Prophecy, and mankind's 'Return' already outlined in the preceding section.[47] Much [illegible] important for [illegible] readers of the *Futûhât* [illegible] the general explanations concerning these different 'credos' (*'aqâ'id*) that Ibn 'Arabi [illegible] [illegible] the very end of this section in his fuller, revised version of this Introduction.]

[173] So that, in abridged and summary form, was the credo of the masses (*'awwâm*) among the people of outward submission (*islâm*) and unthinking compliance (*taqlîd*), and the people of inquiry (i.e. *kalâm*).

Next I shall follow it – God willing – with the credo of 'the educated youth',[48] in which I've included [redacted] extremely abridged summary of *al-Iqtisâd*.[49] In it I've alluded to the [redacted] of the (theological) proofs for this religious community, in rhymed prose to help the student remember it. I've named it 'The Treatise Concerning What is Well-Known Among the Beliefs of the People of External Forms (*ahl al-rusûm*).'

Then I shall follow that with the credo of the elite among the people of God, the 'verifiers' (*muhaqqiqûn*) among the people of the path of God, the people of (spiritual) unveiling and finding[50]. . . . And that completes the Introduction to this book.

[redacted] for presenting the credo of the quintessence (of the spiritual elite), I have not given it in detail in any [redacted] place, because of the profundities it contains. But I have given it scattered throughout the chapters of this book, exhaustively and clearly explained – but in different places, as we've mentioned. So those on whom God has bestowed the understanding of these things will recognize them and distinguish them from other matters. For this is the True Knowing and the Veridical Saying, and there is [redacted] goal beyond It. 'The blind and the truly seeing are alike' in Its regard:[51] It brings together things [redacted] far and most near, and conjoins the [redacted] high and most low. . . .

[187] Continuation (*Wasl*)

Concerning the Belief of the Elite Among the People of God, Between (Discursive) Inquiry and (Spiritual) Unveiling

Praise be to God, Who bewilders the intellects (of human seekers) in (what [redacted] bestows as) the results of their spiritual aspirations . . . ! Now (our) intellects have a limit [redacted] which they stop, insofar as they [redacted] (discursively) thinking, not insofar [redacted] they [redacted] receptive (to God's inspiration). So [redacted] say with regard to something [redacted] consider 'rationally' impossible that it may not be impossible in relation to God – just as we say with regard to what the intellect considers possible that it may be impossible in relation to God. . . .

[The rest of this long section – Ibn 'Arabi's longest addition to this second version of the Introduction – takes up [redacted] sixty-five different theological topics, which together include virtually [redacted] of the questions covered in the remainder of this book. In many of those cases he focuses [redacted] or [redacted] least alludes to the *contrasts* between what the 'intellect' (usually presented here in [redacted] of the conclusions and methods of Ash'arite

kalâm) would consider possible and what might actually be the case according to either the Qur'an or the results of authentic spiritual unveiling. As such, these discussions illustrate both the limitations of intellectual reasoning and the tensions and interplay between the intellect, Scripture, and Ibn 'Arabi's (or other Sufis') spiritual 'openings' which are the recurrent structural leitmotif of the whole of the *Futûhât*: the whole book will be viewed as an extended commentary on this concluding section. Finally, Ibn 'Arabi's last words in this section, and the Introduction as a whole, are a pointed reminder of the many challenges raised by this multi-levelled process of writing – and the multiple readings and practical spiritual efforts it demands:]

[213.11] Now this is the credo of the elite among the people of God. But as for the credo of the quintessence of the elite concerning God, that is to be found beyond this one, which we have scattered throughout this book because the intellects, being veiled by their thoughts, fall short of perceiving it due to their lack of spiritual purification (*tajrîd*).

The Introduction to this book is finished. . . . God speaks the Truth, and He guides on the right Way.

NOTES

1. For a historical and philosophic overview of the key figures in that process, both in the Islamic tradition and the more recent Western students of the Shaykh, see the three-part survey of 'Ibn 'Arabi and His Interpreters' in the *Journal of the American Oriental Society* vol. 106 (1986), pp. 539–52 and 732–56, and vol. 107 (1987), pp. 101–20. For Ibn 'Arabi's problematic attitude toward philosophy and the 'intellectual' sciences, one of the primary subjects of the Introduction to the translated below, see the study by Franz Rosenthal, 'Ibn 'Arabi Between "Philosophy" and "Mysticism" ' in *Oriens* vol. 31 (1988), pp. 1–35, as well as the extensive translations from the *Futûhât* on this subject in W. Chittick, *The Sufi Path of Knowledge* (Albany, NY, 1989). [This anthology is referred to in subsequent notes as Chittick, *SPK*.]

   The underlying autobiographical basis for Ibn 'Arabi's consistent focus on the Qur'an and *hadîth* – grounded in his experience and understanding of his unique role as 'Seal of Muhammadan Sainthood' – have recently been greatly clarified in the studies by M. Chodkiewicz and C. Addas (bibliographic references below).
2. See especially the recently published volumes of *Les Illuminations de La Mecque/The Meccan Illuminations: Selected Texts* (Sindbad, Paris, 1989) and Chittick, *SPK* (preceding note), as well as several projected studies or translations announced in both of those anthologies.
3. On the discussion of some of the notorious efforts to do one or the other of these things to the in our monograph cited at the beginning of Note 1

above. The most recent public controversies in Egypt surrounding the new, more accessible, scientific edition of the text by O. Yahya are [illegible] in Th. [illegible] Homerin, 'Ibn 'Arabi in the People's Assembly: Religion, Press, and Politics [illegible] Sadat's Egypt', pp. 462–77 in *The Middle East Journal* 40 (1986). As a sign of its ongoing sensitivity, [illegible] may note that the [illegible] edition [illegible] still subject (as of this writing) to [illegible] strictly enforced ban [illegible] its commercial export outside Egypt.

4. Some important philosophic and practical implications of the Introduction [illegible] outlined (with illustrations from many sections of the *Futûhât*) in [illegible] article on 'Ibn 'Arabi's "Esotericism" : The Problem of Spiritual Authority' in *Studia Islamica* LXXI (1990), [illegible] related studies (delivered [illegible] conference papers) [illegible] forthcoming.
5. Page references, unless otherwise specified, [illegible] to vol. I of the new edition of *al-Futûhât al-Makkîya* by Osman Yahya (Cairo, 1972/1392); the entire Introduction corresponds to vol. I, pp. 31–47 in the older, four-volume Cairo edition. Within [illegible] translated sections below, [illegible] numbers from the Yahya edition (vol. I) [illegible] given in square brackets [ ]. Some minor subdivision markers [illegible] in the second, longer version of the Introduction [illegible] [illegible] indicated in this outline, but are given in the translation below.
6. Major autobiographical sections of the *khutba* regarding Ibn 'Arabi's role as 'Seal of the Muhammadan Saints' were translated by M. Valsan (originally in *Études Traditionnelles*, 1953) and [illegible] reprinted under the title 'l'Investiture du cheikh al-Akbar au centre suprême' in the volume *l'Islam* [illegible] [illegible] *fonction de René Guénon* (Paris, 1984), pp. 177–91. A much shorter [illegible] [illegible] more recently been translated by L. Shamash and S. Hirtenstein as 'An Extract from the Preface to the *Futûhât*', in *Journal of the Muhyiddin Ibn 'Arabi Society* IV (1985), pp. 4–6.
7. To Ibn 'Arabi's close friends in Tunisia, who [illegible] presented [illegible] key members of the spiritual hierarchy. Together with the *khutba*, this section concludes the first *juz'* of the manuscripts (portions that were read together with or dictated to Ibn 'Arabi's disciples, as indicated by the elaborate *samâ'*-certificates recorded in Yahya's edition); the *Fihrist* makes up the second *juz'*.
8. Only [illegible] 138–72 in Ibn 'Arabi's original version; the [illegible] [illegible] long sections were added in [illegible] [illegible] recension. This section makes up the third *juz'* of the manuscripts.
9. This was originally the *conclusion* of Ibn 'Arabi's Introduction in his first version of the *Futûhât*; the important explanation [illegible] p. 173 of the relationships of the three 'credos' outlined here to the inner meaning of the rest of the *Futûhât* [illegible] likewise added in his second, longer version of [illegible] book. For the partial (and indirect) French translation of this section, [illegible] the full references – and impor- [illegible] cautions – [illegible] Note 47 below.
10. Or 'statements of belief': *'aqâ'id* (singular *'aqîda*) refers to the formal doctrinal [illegible] promulgated by the various schools of *kalâm* theology. It is the [illegible] term Ibn 'Arabi applies to the three longer 'statements of belief' or 'credos' that actually conclude this Introduction.
11. The long-lived prophet [illegible] archetype of direct divine inspiration – [illegible] to in the Quranic [illegible] of Moses' initiation in the following [illegible] from [illegible] [illegible] *of the Cave* (18:65 ff.) – who played an important role in Ibn 'Arabi's own development, as well as in Sufism and popular Islamic spirituality more generally.

12. In each of the [redacted] pronoun 'you' is in [redacted] *plural*; the mysterious term *al-furqân* ('criterion', 'separation') also [redacted] six other times [redacted] Qur'an, usually in reference [redacted] mysterious type or [redacted] of revelation [redacted] spiritual awareness and divine guidance (cf. *sakîna*, *al-hudâ*, etc.) granted to several prophets. The multifaceted verb translated here [redacted] 'to be [redacted] of' [redacted] from the central Quranic term *taqwâ*, which refers [redacted] to [redacted] spiritual condition of fearful awe and reverence of God and to the inner [redacted] outer actions of piety and devotion flowing from that state.
13. This particular saying attributed to the famous early Iranian Sufi, al-Bistami, [redacted] frequently discussed by Ibn 'Arabi, especially in [redacted] where he is disputing with more literalist jurists and theologians the proper ways to understand the spiritual intentions or meanings of [redacted] other scriptural [redacted] (See, for example, the long discussion [redacted] I, 279, translated in Chittick, *SPK*, pp. 248–9.)
14. *Darûratan* ('necessarily'): i.e. anything [redacted] is known 'of necessity' or self-evidently, in such [redacted] way that it [redacted] possibly be refuted or rejected. Here this [redacted] refers to the [redacted] basic, intrinsic logical grounds of [redacted] reasoning, such as [redacted] principle of non-contradiction, etc. But later (at p. 147.4–9) Ibn 'Arabi also admits that the 'knowledge of states' – the 'second level' discussed here – is also 'necessary' or 'immediate' in this broad psychological [redacted] It should [redacted] stressed [redacted] the technical terminology for discussing the processes of reasoning here and throughout this Introduction is mostly drawn from the specifically Islamic religious discipline of *kalâm* (dialectical theology), not from the intellectually more sophisticated Aristotelean philosophy and logic of [redacted] time. (See the further illustrations of this point in the article by F. Rosenthal cited [redacted] Note 1 above).
15. *Dalîl*: in the language of *kalâm*, this [redacted] refer very broadly to [redacted] premise [redacted] argument or proof-text, or [redacted] to a natural phenomenon [redacted] [redacted] underlying such an argument – hence the importance of the inquirer's grasping the relevant 'aspect' (*wajh*) of the sign in question.
16. As will become clearer in the course of [redacted] following discussion (p. 140), Ibn 'Arabi's emphasis here is [redacted] [redacted] the intellective dimension of this sort of knowledge [redacted] such, but rather [redacted] the discursive mental processes of conceptual 'thinking' [*fikr*) and 'inquiry' or 'investigation' (*nazar*) that [redacted] [redacted] to all [redacted] of [redacted] and delusion. In fact, purely 'intellective' knowing (*'ilm al-'aql*) is [redacted] of [redacted] two types of 'inspired' spiritual knowledge making up the third and highest level outlined below.
17. *Ahwâl* (singular *hâl*): in the traditional technical language of Sufism this [redacted] usually refers to specifically *spiritual* states (corresponding to the third level of 'knowledge of mysteries' below). Here, however, Ibn 'Arabi is using it – [redacted] the related expression for 'direct personal experience' (*dhawq*, literally 'tasting') – in [redacted] unusually restricted [redacted] limited only to the most basic levels of external and internal sensation.
18. *'ilm al-asrâr* (singular *sirr*): depending [redacted] the context [redacted] perspective, the latter term could also be translated [redacted] spiritual 'mysteries'. For example [redacted] the end of Ibn 'Arabi's opening 'Letter (to al-Mahdawi)' he [redacted] the purpose of [redacted] Introduction as 'setting forth the knowledge of [redacted] divine secrets/mysteries this book contains' (p. 74.2).

19. The opening section of a famous *hadîth*, recorded by Muslim and Ibn Hanbal, in which Muhammad alludes to his experience of divine inspiration: see Lane, s.v. *rû'*, and Wensinck, *Concordance*, II, p. 320. 'Saint' here translates *al-walî*, the 'friend of God'; the term 'prophet' (*nabî*) is to be understood – following Ibn 'Arabi's – as a very broad extending from the saints through many pre-islamic prophets to the much smaller group of lawgiving prophetic 'messengers' (*rusul*).
20. That is, through God's 'informing' (*ikhbâr*) the prophet or saint, by of one another of the various forms of divine communication mentioned in the Qur'an and *hadîth*, and frequently analyzed by Ibn 'Arabi. The same Arabic phrase could also be read 'through reports' (*akhbâr*) – i.e. as communicated by God or some other angelic agency, and perhaps eventually by a prophet saint receiving such inspiration.
21. Literally, 'knows all knowledges (or "sciences")'; the last part of the phrase also 'is completely filled with them' 'completely them'.
22. This Arabic phrase strongly – no doubt intentionally – recalls many of the Quranic descriptions of God's Knowledge, reflecting Ibn 'Arabi's underlying metaphysical insistence on the cosmic 'mirroring' reality of the 'Perfect Human Being' (*al-insân al-kâmil*).
23. *Ma'sûm*: i.e. divinely 'preserved' from any possibility of moral or spiritual error and deviation – a rare state that most Sunni theologians would typically restrict to the prophets (although Shiites and some Sufis have often extended it somewhat broadly).
24. Or 'the (ignorant) masses' (*al-'âmma*), whom Ibn 'Arabi with the first, most dogmatic and theological credo he outlines below (pp. 162–72).
25. It is important to underline here the Arabic terms Ibn 'Arabi is using (*rukn* and *asl*) clearly to stress the extremely narrow character of this limitation – restricted to the fundamental and indisputable dimensions of Islamic *scripture*, distinct from the historically elaborated systems of intellectual interpretation developed in the later schools of *kalâm* and *fiqh*. The broader political implications of the practically *alternative* understanding of Islam based on the experience and guidance of the 'friends of God' (*awliyâ'*) which he begins to suggest here – and develops far more elaborately throughout the *Meccan Illuminations* – summarized (based on key from the *Futûhât*) in our article on 'Ibn 'Arabi's "Esotericism": The Problem of Spiritual Authority', in *Studia Islamica* LXXI (1990).
26. In the short omitted here (p. 141.8–13) Ibn 'Arabi draws an analogy to the acceptance of testimony of witnesses considered reliable responsible in the actual application of Islamic law with regard to people's lives and property. As in those he concludes (quoting verse 43:19), the responsibility for any false or misleading testimony will eventually be taken up between soul and God.
27. *Riwâya*: clearly Ibn 'Arabi is alluding here to the familiar historical, oral (or written) chains of transmission of in particular.
28. Ibn 'Arabi does explicitly identify the individuals he is referring to here, but in the context it can only be those having the 'knowledge of secrets' who – unlike prophets – *not* universally known to be truthful and without sin: i.e. the

living saints — 'Friends of God' (*awliyâ' Allâh*). The italicized points in the following — reflect strong explicit emphases in Ibn 'Arabi's — Arabic syntax here.

29. *Muhaddathûn*: see Ibn 'Arabi's more — phenomenological discussion of — particular type of divine inspiration (involving 'hearing' of an inspired — without any vision) – and of many other forms of reception of — 'knowledge of secrets' — III, 38–9 (translated — Chittick, *SPK*, pp. 261–3). Bukhari (*fadâ'il al-ashâb*, no. 38) records — versions (both from Abû Hurayra) of this important *hadîth*, which — apparently conflated in Ibn 'Arabi's allusion to that *hadîth* here. Ibn 'Arabi concludes this paragraph with a vague reference to Abu Bakr's similar willingness to share some of the special spiritual 'knowledge of secrets' bestowed — him.
30. — of the most famous and prolific transmitters of — among the Companions of Muhammad, — of many reports in the canonical Sunni collections of — — Muslim, including — — regarding 'Umar — Ibn 'Arabi — just cited (at the preceding note).
31. Ibn 'Arabi — — — describe in detail (pp. 142.6–143.9) four different occasions (extending from Ceuta, in 589, and Seville in 592, — — in 599) — specific chains of transmission for this same *hadîth*, in each case going back to al-Bukhari (*K. al-'ilm*, no. 42). This unusual repetition seems intended to underline the practical importance of this issue and the preoccupation of his Sufi contemporaries with defending this pre-eminent practical 'complement' to externally transmitted forms of Prophetic tradition.
32. The problem concerning the meaning of this verse is apparently connected with the following two points: both of — pronouns ('them') referring to the 'seven heavens' (and earths) — unexpectedly in the personal (feminine) plural form usually reserved for *animate* beings; and the further connections between those — heavens — the spiritual 'realities' — 'abodes' of various prophets (as described, for example, in the various Ascension *hadîth*) raise a number of critical questions – which were heatedly debated in early Shiite and later Sufi thought – about the forms of earthly manifestation of the spiritual hierarchy of intermediaries between the Absolute and terrestrial humanity.
33. — 'Arabi traces his source for this *hadîth* back to the prolific Sufi writer Abu Hamid al-Ghazali, through his celebrated Andalusian disciple, the Maliki Qadi Abu Bakr Ibn 'Arabi (no direct relative of the mystic himself), who was influential in introducing Ghazali's writings in Muslim Spain.
34. It is remarkable that Ibn 'Arabi here (apparently in all three of Osman Yahya's manuscript sources) — the longer formula of blessings ordinarily reserved for the Prophet. The Sharif al-Radi, — Twelver Shiite scholar of the fourth century AH, is best known for his collection of the sayings and — attributed to 'Ali, the celebrated *Nahj al-Balâgha*.
35. Since — of the main points of the — Quranic story is precisely the necessity of keeping such spiritual insights from all those who — not yet prepared to benefit from them.
36. *Wasl* (given — — separate 'Section'/*fasl* in the original recension), pp. 145–53; I, pp. 32–4 in the four-volume standard Cairo edition.
37. Here Ibn 'Arabi is continuing to speak about the inspired 'knowledge of divine

secrets' discussed in [illegible] preceding section. For him, all such inspired knowledge of [illegible] saints or friends of God is in fact 'inherited' from the spiritual 'Realities' of [illegible] or [illegible] of [illegible] prophets: [illegible] the detailed explanations of this complex relationship (assumed throughout the celebrated *Fusûs al-Hikam*) in M. Chodkiewicz, *Le Sceau des saints: Prophétie et sainteté dans la doctrine d'Ibn Arabî* (Gallimard, Paris, 1986), and many illustrative passages translated from the *Futûhât* (English selections by W. Chittick and J. Morris) in Ibn 'Arabi, *Les Illuminations de La Mecque/The Meccan Illuminations: Selected Texts* (Sindbad, Paris, 1989), index s.v. *wârith/héritier*.

38. *al-SQfT al-muhaqqiq*: [illegible] 'Arabi often [illegible] the latter adjective to distinguish the relatively small set of so-called 'Sufis' who have actually accomplished, realized and 'verified' the disciplines and teachings of the spiritual path. Here in the Introduction this term is [illegible] thinly veiled allusion [illegible] [illegible] 'Arabi's own personal contributions regarding this prophetic 'knowledge of secrets' throughout the *Futûhât*.

39. This [illegible] summarized here (145.7–146.8) is partly translated [illegible] p. 12 of the [illegible] article by Franz Rosenthal cited at Note 1 above. Despite Ibn 'Arabi's disingenuous reference here to similarities in the field of ethics, the most striking correspondences in the *Futûhât* to positions of contemporary Islamic 'philosophy' (including [illegible] physical science) are almost certainly in [illegible] closely related [illegible] of cosmology, physical theory (elements, humours, etc.) and the [illegible] cosmological aspects of metaphysics. (Most of those points of contact are [illegible] [illegible] summarized in the above-mentioned article by F. Rosenthal.) The less controversial correspondences between his 'inspired' Sufi knowledge and the 'rational' teachings of *kalâm* [illegible] of course far more extensive, reflecting their common sources in Qur'an and *hadîth*.

40. In the few lines omitted here (p. 147.6–9) Ibn 'Arabi points out that both the 'knowledge of states' and the inspired 'knowledge of (spiritual) secrets' [illegible] indeed 'self-evident' or 'immediate' (*darûrî*) in [illegible] way resembling the logical first principles of rational, discursive knowledge. But he [illegible] on [illegible] point out [illegible] such inspired knowledge is also entirely *different* in that 'it is only self-evident to whoever witnesses it' – and that direct witnessing (*mushâhada*) is limited [illegible] the prophets and friends of God.

41. See vol. II, pp. 297–320 of the older, four-volume edition of the *Futûhât*. This lengthy chapter [illegible] spiritual knowledge (*ma'rifa*), immediately preceding the more frequently studied and translated chapter on Love, deals in much greater detail with many of the basic epistemological questions raised here in the Introduction.

42. *Tatimma*, pp. 154–61. This subheading [illegible] added in the second recension; it [illegible] not in the earliest manuscript version.

43. The reference here is to Ibn 'Arabi's opening discussion of the ideal reader (*al-muta'ahhib*: i.e. [illegible] with the right spiritual aptitude practically following the Sufi path) [illegible] the very beginning of the Introduction above.

44. To avoid any possible misunderstanding, [illegible] should [illegible] emphasized that Ibn 'Arabi here is [illegible] saying that the 'properly prepared person' should be just like ordinary people. It is precisely their special aptitude that enables them to experience directly the 'inner aspect' (*bâtin*) of the Qur'an which, for Ibn 'Arabi [illegible] least, is virtually coextensive with [illegible] cosmic 'Reality of Muhammad'.

For the autobiographical underpinnings of this perception, manifested throughout of 'Arabi's works, the key analyzed by C. in *Ibn 'Arabi, ou la quête du Soufre Rouge* (Gallimard, Paris, 1989). also our translation of one of the most important of those from chapter of *Futûhât*, in Ibn 'Arabi, *Les Illuminations La Mecque/The Meccan Illuminations: Selected Texts* (Sindbad, Paris, 1989), pp. 134–5. (e.g. 'Everything about which speak, in my (teaching) sessions and in my writings, only from the presence of the Qur'an Its . . .')

45. In the following (158–61) Ibn 'Arabi sketches out his first and simplest Quranic credo, beginning with some of the basic divine Names, the existence and functions of prophecy, and affirmations about the aims and sufficiency of the Qur'an itself in helping human beings to reach their ultimate end. The same outline is followed, albeit in much greater depth, in each of the succeeding credal statements.
46. Originally this section (pp. 162–72; I, 36–8 in the older Cairo edition) was the concluding part of Ibn 'Arabi's Introduction. This subtitle added in the second recension, when two 'credos' also appended.
47. More than of this section is included – albeit with highly significant additions and omissions – the beginning of a much later Hanbalite (and Qadiri Sufi) polemic work translated by R. Deladrière (and attributed throughout to Ibn 'Arabi), *La Profession de foi* (Editions Orientales, Paris, 1978), pp. 91–101. [See the important cautions concerning the dangerous misattribution of this entire Hanbalite to Ibn 'Arabi discussed in survey of 'Ibn 'Arabi and His Interpreters, Part II: Influences and Interpretations', in the *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 106.4 (1986), pp. 741–4.]
48. Or 'the singing youth' (?): moreover, the narrator of that strange colloquium (see following note) is placed in the feminine here, but appears in the masculine within the story itself (at 174.3 and 186.13).
49. Possibly (following the suggestion of O. Yahya) allusion to al-Ghazali's well-known *kalâm* catechism, *al-Iqtisâd fî al-I'tiqâd* ('The Mean With Regard Belief'). While the discussion does *kalâm* language (and carefully avoids the Quranic quotations used in the preceding discussions), it be admitted that the further possible connections to Ghazali's work not entirely obvious. The narrator of this section claims to describe the encounter the centre of the world of 'four learned individuals' from the four corners of the globe, and their com- search for the knowledge truly worth knowing. It consists of four didactic monologues dealing successively with God; His Attributes; creation and prophecy; and mankind's salvation and eschatology – roughly the order in previous credo.
50. Or '(true) Being': *ahl al-kashf wa al-wujûd*. All of these terms Ibn 'Arabi frequently more or less equivalently to refer to those he considered the (relatively) accomplished or realized Sufis. (See many illustrations from the *Futûhât* in Chittick, *SPK*, Index s.vv.)
51. Unless the editor has left out a negation here, Ibn 'Arabi appears to be playing with the expected Quranic *contrast* of the blind and seeing (cf. 6:50, etc.): in that case these final remarks may be alluding to the particularly metaphysical, universal character of the wisdom in question here.

Two Chapters from the *Futûhât al-Makkiyya*

WILLIAM C. CHITTICK

Ibn al-'Arabi's magnum opus, *al-Futûhât al-Makkiyya*, 'The Meccan Openings', is known [illegible] least by [illegible] to all students of Sufism. In spite of its importance for Islamic thought in general, and Ibn al-'Arabi in particular, few scholars have taken advantage of its [illegible] riches because of the numerous difficulties connected with reading and understanding the text. Some of those interested in the Greatest Master have made necessity into a virtue by suggesting that, in any case, everything important is contained in Ibn al-'Arabi's *Fusûs al-Hikam*. This statement has [illegible] grain of truth to it in the sense that the *mujmal* or 'undifferentiated' level contains within itself the *mufassal* or 'differentiated' level, much [illegible] seed contains the tree.

One also hears the opinion that the *Fusûs* is more 'esoteric' than the *Futûhât*, and therefore, it seems, [illegible] valuable. But this opinion could hardly be expressed by anyone who has carefully studied both texts, since there is hardly an idea in the *Fusûs* not to be found expressed more clearly and in [illegible] detail somewhere in the *Futûhât*. Of course, by 'more esoteric' one may simply mean that the *Fusûs* is often more difficult to understand. To the extent this is true, the reason goes back to the point just made: the *Fusûs* is composed largely of brief allusions, while the same doctrines [illegible] exposed in full detail in the *Futûhât*. Moreover, there [illegible] certain sections of the *Futûhât* (one thinks in particular of the 128-page Chapter 559, which is several times [illegible] long [illegible] the *Fusûs*), which is more 'esoteric' in every [illegible] of the word than anything found in the *Fusûs* itself.

The real problem facing the student of Ibn al-'Arabi is that [illegible] full significance of his undifferentiated teachings [illegible] found, for example, in the *Fusûs*, cannot be grasped without clarification from those works which express the [illegible] teachings in differentiated and explicit detail. Those who desire to gain [illegible] serious understanding of these teachings, even if they maintain that the esoteric marrow is found in the *Fusûs*, have no choice but to study the *Futûhât* and other works to [illegible] the *Fusûs*'s full implications.

Some of those unfamiliar with the [illegible] of the *Futûhât* and the develop- [illegible] of the extensive commentary literature on the *Fusûs* might argue that this or that *Fusûs* commentator gives [illegible] all the elucidation that [illegible]

need, but this is to ignore the fact that the commentary tradition of the took on a life of its own, much more concerned with contemporary developments in Islamic thought than with the actual of Ibn al-'Arabi's teachings. Then, as now, authors kept their audience in mind; the *Fusûs* commentaries tell us as much about contemporary intellectual concerns about the text itself.

Careful study of this literature suggests that different aspects of the *Fusûs* are stressed in different periods and places, and that of the central discussions of the work are often pushed into the background. It is only by going to al-'Arabi's own works that can bring out the significance of the *Fusûs* for Ibn al-'Arabi and his immediate disciples. Naturally, are still faced with the problem that 'commentary' is determined much by the contemporary intellectual situation of the work; moreover, in English there is the added and indeed major problem of 'translation', which needs to be understood in the widest sense, 'carrying over' a particular world view into an alien intellectual universe. By avoiding the intermediary links in the commentary literature and going directly to the source, we certainly have something to gain.[1]

Until recently only small number of from the *Futûhât* were available in Western languages, mainly French.[2] This situation has now changed significantly by the publication, under the direction of Michel Chodkiewicz, of an anthology called *Les Illuminations de La Mecque/The Meccan Illuminations: Textes choisis/Selected Texts*. In addition, my recent work, *The Sufi Path of Knowledge: Ibn al-'Arabi's Metaphysics of Imagination*, consists mostly of passages translated from the *Futûhât*. But the task of presenting the *Futûhât* to Western readers has barely begun. The original text is enormously long and extraordinarily full of difficulties. My purpose here is to offer two short chapters minor contribution to this ongoing project.

The two chapters below deal with several themes. Among these, two of the central ideas of Ibn al-'Arabi's spiritual universe stand out: the 'Oneness of Being' (*wahdat al-wujûd*) and 'Perfect Man' (*al-insân al-kâmil*). I originally translated the chapters in 1985 during the preliminary stages of preparing my contribution to Chodkiewicz's anthology. Later we decided that the material they deal with covered sufficiently by other chapters or was not as central to the concerns of that work we had hoped. As result I put the chapters aside for other sion, which has now presented itself. what follows I have thoroughly revised the translations and brief introductions along with minimal notes. Since many of the topics discussed covered in form in the two works mentioned above, I usually refer the reader to those works for clarification or elaboration. Most of the themes

explained in the introductions [illegible] discussed in those works in some detail.

CHAPTER 317
CONCERNING THE TRUE KNOWLEDGE OF THE WAYSTATION OF TRIAL AND ITS BLESSINGS[1]

Introduction

Like many chapters in the *Futûhât*, Chapter 317 deals with [illegible] number of topics whose interrelationship is hardly clear [illegible] first glance. One might tie together the major subjects as follows: 'Trial' (*ibtilâ'*) is [illegible] testing to which God puts human beings and the *jinn*. It results from 'prescription' (*taklîf*), i.e. the fact that God has made incumbent upon them [illegible] ship (*'ibâda*) as [illegible] down in the Shari'a (the revealed Law). Prescription in turn depends upon [illegible] in the present world (*al-dunyâ*), which arises from the connection between the spirit (*rûh*) and the body (*jism*). However, there is another kind of life intrinsic to all things which also entails [illegible] kind of worship, since, in the words of the Qur'an (in one of many similar verses): 'There is nothing that does [illegible] glorify Him in praise, but you do not understand their glorification' (17:44).[4]

The fact that the life which demands prescription derives from the spirit brings up [illegible] question of death, which occurs when the spirit leaves [illegible] body, and this in turn calls to mind the *barzakh* (the intermediary stage of existence between death and resurrection) and the 'next world' (*al-âkhira*) properly so-called, in both of which the spirit is once again attached to the body, though the body is manifest in [illegible] 'imaginal' rather [illegible] corporeal mode.

Ibn al-'Arabi then connects God's trial of mankind with human understanding of the afterlife, i.e. with the question of correct faith and true knowledge. For faith in 'God, the angels, the prophets, the books, [illegible] the Last Day' is incumbent upon all Muslims, and if this faith is to be sound, it must be [illegible] upon correct knowledge.

Finally Ibn al-'Arabi turns, as he usually does, to the 'divine root' (*al-asl al-ilâhî*) of the discussion [illegible] hand, i.e. the divine [illegible] names which manifest their properties through the reality being discussed. In this section of the chapter his particular concern is to show that the spirit manifests the names Living (*al-hayy*) and Light (*al-nûr*) and that, in the last analysis, God Himself is the spirit of the cosmos, while the [illegible] is His body. Hence he concludes the chapter by illustrating the [illegible] of the Oneness of Being, although, of course, [illegible] does not use the expression *wahdat al-wujûd*, since it was coined by his followers.

Ibn al-'Arabi's [illegible] infrequent discussions of 'trial' (*ibtilâ'*) in the

[redacted] usually have in view those Quranic [redacted] which discuss the trials [redacted] to which God puts His creatures, such as the following: 'We have made all that is on the earth an adornment for it, and that We may try which of them is fairest in works' (18:7); 'He has raised [redacted] of you in rank above others, that He may try you in what He [redacted] given you' (6:165), and 'We shall assuredly try you until We know those of you who struggle and are steadfast' (47:31).[5]

In the present chapter, Ibn al-'Arabi takes up specifically the relationship between the following two Quranic verses: 'Blessed be He in whose hand is [redacted] Kingdom, who is powerful over everything, who created death and life, that He might try you, which of you is fairest in works' (67:1–2); and 'His Throne is upon the water, that He might try you, which of you is fairest in works' (11:9). In both verses God is alluded to [redacted] 'King' (*al-malik*), in the first because He owns the Kingdom (*mulk*) and in the second because He sits upon the Throne (*'arsh*). What needs to be explained is why the King's Throne rests upon the 'water' and what His kingship [redacted] to do with trial.

God's argument against human beings depends upon the messages which He sends through the prophets, whereby He prescribes (*taklîf*) for them the commands and prohibitions of the Shari'a. The word *taklîf* means literally 'to impose a burden': God tries people by placing upon them the burden of the revealed Law. Human beings along with the *jinn* are unique among creatures in having this responsibility placed upon them. Even that which appears outwardly [redacted] pure blessing (*ni'ma*) is in fact [redacted] trial, since the servant must [redacted] to blessings in accordance with prescription. As Ibn al-'Arabi writes:

> The blessings with which God blesses His servants in this world [redacted] free of trial, since thanksgiving (*shukr*) is prescribed for the servants, and this is the greatest of trials, since blessings are [redacted] greater veil over God than afflictions.
> III 209.21

Thanksgiving, incidentally, is an important theme of the second chapter translated below.

The present chapter begins with [redacted] poem alluding to the human body as [redacted] vehicle for the spirit and a locus for the trials which the spirit undergoes. The spirit and the body [redacted] the two poles of macrocosmic and microcosmic existence. The spirit is 'of the Breath of God', so its essential attributes [redacted] delineated by God's [redacted] Since the first of the divine [redacted] – the 'leader of the leaders' (*imâm al-a'imma*) upon which all others depend – is the Living, the spirit is usually associated with the attribute of life, [redacted] in the chapter on Jesus in the *Fusûs*. All the other divine attributes follow in the wake of life. Hence the spirit also possesses knowledge and awareness, luminosity, desire, power, speech, generosity, justice, and [redacted] on.

The body stands [redacted] the opposite pole of cosmic existence; compared to the spirit it possesses hardly any trace of these attributes and can conveniently be referred to by their opposites, such [redacted] death, ignorance, darkness, [redacted] dumbness. The life and luminosity which [redacted] perceive in bodily things derive from the spirit's activity. Hence the [redacted] – 'everything other than God' – has two extremes, both macrocosmically [redacted] microcosmically. On the luminous extreme, that of spirit, the divine attributes [redacted] present in relatively full splendour, while on the dark side, that of the body, they [redacted] absent for all practical purposes.[6]

However, nothing in the cosmos is absolute, even if certain things reflect the absolutely Real or Its qualities [redacted] directly than others. If in one respect life pertains only to the spirit, this is true when the spirit is envisaged in relationship to the body. Then [redacted] may fairly speak of contrasting sets of attributes, such as life and death, light and darkness. [redacted] if [redacted] look [redacted] bodily things inasmuch as they are self-disclosures (*tajallî*) of God, then, like the spirit, they manifest the attributes of God through their very existence, since *wujûd* ('Being' or 'existence' or 'finding') is the [redacted] Himself. To exist is to manifest the divine attributes. As Ibn al-'Arabi's followers expressed this idea, '*Wujûd* descends with all its soldiers.' Even that which is dead or inanimate possesses [redacted] certain form of life. That is why the Qur'an says that everything in the universe, animate or inanimate, glorifies God.

Ibn al-'Arabi insists that such verses must not [redacted] interpreted in a figurative or symbolic sort of way, as [redacted] reference to the 'state' (*hâl*) of the thing – [redacted] plant, let us say, glorifying God by making manifest His life-giving power. On the contrary, this glorification is verbal and aware, the proof lying not only in explicit Quranic statements and *hadîths*, but also in the visionary experience of the gnostics, who witness this glorification with the heart's eyes and ears. Hence every existent thing is alive, knowing, desiring, and so on, because these attributes [redacted] intrinsic to existence. Ibn al-'Arabi discusses this point in [redacted] detail in the middle of the passage.

[redacted] of Chapter 317

This is [redacted] waystation of the [redacted] who stands at the left hand of the Pole.[7]

I wonder [redacted] the house He has built and shaped,
placing therein a noble spirit, putting it to the trial.
He destroyed it utterly, [redacted] if He had not built it.
Who [redacted] put [redacted] together for me, who [redacted] [redacted] [redacted] last?
He knew full well what He [redacted] set up –
[redacted] [redacted] I knew what [redacted] knew!

Why did He not from the first build that house
as a lasting structure whose life does not disappear?
[redacted] did nothing to make it deserve ruin,
[redacted] why did He raise it up, and why did He lay it waste?
The hand of trial toyed with [redacted] and it
and after a time restored it and raised it high.
Returned to the house, the spirit mounted upon its throne
as a king, making its inhabitants immortal,
Blessing it with [redacted] Eden and an everlasting Garden,
causing it to dwell in paradise and shelter.

Know (God confirm you, O dear and noble friend!) that life belongs to the spirits – which govern all bodies, whether of fire, earth, [redacted] light[8] just as brightness belongs to the sun. Life is an intrinsic attribute of the spirits, so spirits do not become manifest to anything unless that thing comes to life; the life of the spirit that becomes manifest [redacted] it permeates it. In the [redacted] way the brightness of the sun permeates the body of the air, the face of the earth, and every place in which the sun becomes manifest.

From here one [redacted] to know who is the spirit of the cosmos, from whom it seeks the replenishment of its life, and what is the meaning of [redacted] words, 'God is the light of the heavens and the earth' (Qur'an 24:35). Then [in the rest of verse 24:35] He employs a likeness, for He says, 'The likeness of His light is like [redacted] niche wherein is [redacted] lamp,' which is the light – and [redacted] to the end of the simile. He who understands this verse knows how God preserves the cosmos. Hence this verse is one of the mysteries of the true knowledge of God in the interrelationship between the God (*al-ilâh*) and the divine thrall (*al-ma'lûh*), or the Lord and the vassal.[9] If God did not undertake to preserve the thrall and the vassal constantly, they would immediately be annihilated, since nothing would preserve them and keep them in subsistence. Were He to become veiled in the Unseen from the cosmos, the [redacted] would become naught. Hence the [redacted] 'Manifest' (*al-zâhir*) exercises its properties forever in existence, while the name 'Nonmanifest' (*al-bâtin*) exercises its properties in knowledge and gnosis. Through the [redacted] Manifest He makes the [redacted] subsist, through the [redacted] Nonmanifest [redacted] come [redacted] know Him, and through the name Light [redacted] witness Him.[10]

There is life in the human being, who is our object of attention in this chapter – for this chapter deals with trial, which encompasses the two weighty [redacted] [*jinn* and mankind] for whom prescriptions [redacted] made. Nothing other than the two weighty ones is like us in the property of worship (*'ibâda*) and prescription (*taklîf*). Hence my words about the human being alone in respect of his life concern everything other than God, while my words about his trial concern everyone for whom prescription is made, i.e. the two weighty ones.

God says, 'His Throne [redacted] upon the water' (Qur'an 11:9). Here 'upon' (*'alâ*) [redacted] 'in' (*fî*), that is, the Throne was in the water, just as man is 'in' water. In other words, man came to be from (*min*) water, for water is the root of all existent things. It is the throne of the divine life, since 'From water' God created 'every living thing' (Qu'ran 21:31), and everything other than God is living, since everything other than God glorifies Him in praise, while glorification cannot take place except in a living thing. Reports have come concerning the life of everything: wet [redacted] dry, inanimate, plant, earth, and heaven.[11]

Here there occurs [redacted] dispute between the people of unveiling (*ahl al-kashf*) and certain others who have no unveiling, and between the people of faith and those who do not acknowledge the revealed religions (*sharâ'i'*) or who interpret (*ta'wîl*) them in ways in which they have not come, for they say that this glorification takes place 'through the [redacted] (*hâl*)'. As for [redacted] thing whose life is perceived by the senses, there is no dispute [redacted] to its life. The dispute occurs only concerning the [redacted] of its life and that to which its glorifying its Lord in praise [redacted] back, since no [redacted] can glorify but him who is alive [redacted] intelligent and who understands what he says. The opponent holds that living things other than mankind and *jinn* have no intelligence, in contrast to what is believed by us and the people of unveiling and sound faith. Here by 'intelligence' (*'aql*) I mean 'knowledge' (*'ilm*).[12]

In this verse the 'Throne' (*'arsh*) consists of the 'kingdom' (*mulk*).[13] 'Was' (*kân*) is [redacted] word which denotes existence.[14] Hence the meaning is: The kingdom exists in water, or water is the root of the manifestation of the kingdom's entity. Water is as it were the *hylê* of the kingdom; within it become manifest the forms of the cosmos, which is the kingdom of God. The cosmos is restricted to entities and relationships. The entities [redacted] existential, while the relationships are intelligible and non-existent.[15] This is 'everything other than God'.[16]

Since water is the root of life and of every living thing, while the relationships are subordinate to water, He makes a connection between the Throne placed upon the water and His creation of death and life in trial. [redacted] says, 'His Throne is upon the water, that He might try you' (11:9), i.e. test you. The Throne, [redacted] I mentioned to you, consists of existent entities and non-existent relationships. He also says, '[Blessed be He . . .] who created death and life, that He might try you' (67:1–2). So life belongs to the entities, and death to the relationships.[17]

The spirit's manifestation to the body is the life of that body, just as the sun becomes manifest in order to illuminate those bodies to which it becomes manifest. The spirit's absence from the body is the disappearance of life from it, i.e. death. Hence coming together is life and separation death. Coming together and separation are intelligible

relationships with manifest properties, [illegible] though they have no existence in entity.

You should know that all the faculties in man and every living thing, like the faculties of sensation, imagination, memory, form-giving, and all the other faculties attributed [illegible] all bodies, high and low, belong only to the spirit. They come [illegible] when the spirit exists and bestows life upon [illegible] body. When one of the faculties [illegible] to be, this is because [illegible] spirit [illegible] away from the body in the respect in which that specific faculty [illegible] [illegible] be. [illegible] understand!

When the spirit turns away from the body entirely, all the faculties and life disappear along with the spirit's disappearance. This is called 'death'. It is like night through the absence of the sun. As for sleep, it is not a complete turning away.[18] Rather, it is vaporous veils which come bet- [illegible] the faculties and the sensory objects of their perception, while life remains in the sleeper. This is [illegible] the sun when clouds [illegible] between it and [illegible] specific location on the earth. The brightness – like life [in the sleeper] – continues to exist, but the [illegible] cannot [illegible] perceived because of the thickness of the intervening clouds.

When the light of the [illegible] leaves this location [illegible] the earth and night [illegible] to its end, the light becomes manifest in another location, illuminating [illegible] that day [illegible] there just as it had come in the first location. In the [illegible] way, [illegible] the spirit leaves the body that had possessed life through it, it discloses itself to a form in the 'Trumpet' (*sûr*), which is known [illegible] the *barzakh* and which is the plural of *sûra* ('form').[19] Then the *barzakh* form comes to life. Similarly the Prophet said that the life-breath (*nasama*) of the person of faith is a green bird [after death].[20] That bird is like the body here. It is [illegible] form that has [illegible] to life through the spirit which had been giving life to the body. Just as the [illegible] will rise up over [illegible] again tomorrow, illuminating the existent things by its light, so also the spirit will rise up over the dead bodies on the 'day' of the [illegible] world, bringing them [illegible] life. This is the Unfolding (*nashr*) and the Uprising (*ba'th*).

You should know that God brought the Trumpet into existence in the form of [illegible] horn. It [illegible] named the 'Trumpet' in the way that things [illegible] named by the name of what is near to them or causes them to be. Since this horn is [illegible] locus for all the *barzakh* forms into which the spirits pass after death [illegible] in sleep, it [illegible] called *sûr*, the plural of 'form'. Its shape [illegible] that of [illegible] horn: its high end is wide [illegible] its low end is narrow, like the shape of [illegible] [illegible] How can the wideness of the Throne be compared [illegible] the [illegible] of the earth?[21] The faculties [illegible] with the spirit into that *barzakh* form in sleep and death. That is why the spirit perceives [in both of these states] by [illegible] of all its faculties without distinction. Thus have I given you knowledge of the actual situation.

It is here that those who uphold transmigration (*tanâsukh*) have

slipped. When they [illegible] or heard that the prophets gave news of the passage of the spirits into these *barzakh* forms, within which they come to be in the form of their character traits, and when they saw those character traits in animals, they imagined that the words of the prophets, messengers, and men of knowledge referred to the animals of this world and that the spirit would be returned for purification, and they mentioned what they had come [illegible] know of the prophets' position. Hence they [illegible] mistaken in their view and in their interpretation (*ta'wîl*) of the words of the messengers and what the revealed books have said about that. They saw that a dreamer is near to this affair into which they had entered, so they were happy with the position they took. Hence their position only came to them from a bad interpretation of sound words.[22]

This is the meaning of His words, 'To try you': to [illegible] your rational faculties through death and life. 'Which of you is fairest in works', through pondering and considering the two. Then [illegible] will [illegible] which of you is correct, and which is mistaken, like those who uphold transmigration.

He made all this [illegible] clear proof and set it up [illegible] conclusive demonstration of His name Living, His name Light, and His names Manifest, Non-manifest, First, and Last. Thereby [illegible] person may know the relationship between the cosmos and Him who brought it into existence. A person will know that the cosmos is not independent in itself, that its poverty toward God is an intrinsic poverty, not separate from it for the blink of an eye, and that the relationships are constant in property because of the subsistence of the existence of the entities.[23] He is the Inaccessible, Unapproachable, and Unreachable lest His creatures perceive Him and lest 'anything of His knowledge' be comprehended 'save such [illegible] [illegible] wills' (Qur'an 2:254). He is the All-concealing (*al-ghafûr*)[24] who curtains rational faculties from the perception of His [illegible] inmost [illegible] or the inmost centre of His majesty.

Know O friend (God give light to your insight!) that it has now been established for you that the life of all bodies derives from the life of the spirits which govern them and that death takes place through the separation of the spirits from them. At this point the order (*nizâm*) of the two disappears, since the faculties which hold fast to the bodies disappear with the disappearance of the spirit which God appointed to govern them.

You should also know that life in all things is two lives: life derived from a secondary cause, i.e. the life which [illegible] have mentioned and attributed to the spirits; and another life, which is intrinsic to all bodies just as life is intrinsic to the spirits. However, an effect of the life of the spirits becomes manifest in the governed bodies through the diffusion of the spirits' brightness within them and through the manifestation of the spirits' faculties, which we mentioned. But the life intrinsic to the bodies

is [illegible] like that, since the bodies [illegible] not created to govern. Hence, through their intrinsic life – which cannot disappear from them, since it is an attribute of their own selves (*nafsî*) – they glorify their Lord constantly, whether or not their spirits are within them. Their spirits give them nothing of glorification except a second, accidental, specific condition. When the spirit departs from them, so also does this specific remembrance (*dhikr*), which is the speech (*kalâm*) usual among us, whether it reaches the senses as glorification or something else.

The possessor of unveiling perceives the intrinsic life which is found in all bodies. When something happens to any bodily thing which [illegible] it from its [illegible] order, such [illegible] the breaking of [illegible] dish, the breaking of [illegible] stone, [illegible] the cutting of [illegible] tree, this is like the amputation of a person's [illegible] or leg, whereby the life of the governing spirit disappears from [illegible] while its intrinsic life remains. Every form in the [illegible] possesses a governing spirit and [illegible] intrinsic life. The spirit disappears with the disappearance of the form, like a person who is slain. Likewise the form disappears with the disappearance of the spirit, like [illegible] person who dies in his bed without having been struck by [illegible] sword. But the intrinsic [illegible] that belongs to every indivisible substance (*jawhar fard*) does not disappear.

Through this intrinsic life – toward which God blinds the eyes of [illegible] creatures – skin, tongues, arms, and legs will testify against the people on the Day of Resurrection.[25] Through it [illegible] man's thigh will speak [illegible] the end of time, giving news to him of the acts of his wife.[26] Through it trees will speak [illegible] the end of time when Jews hide behind them and Muslims are seeking them to slay them. A tree will say to [illegible] Muslim, when it sees him hunting for the Jew, 'O Muslim, there is [illegible] Jew behind me, so slay him,' so he will slay him. But the thornbush (*gharqad*) will conceal the Jew when he [illegible] to it, which is why the Messenger of God cursed it.[27] Nor [illegible] it be said that the [illegible] only felt pity toward him who relied [illegible] it, like people of noble character, since you should know that God's right has more claim to be observed and that it is more necessary for a person of faith to employ a noble character for God. Do you not see that [illegible] says, 'In the matter of God's religion, let no pity for them seize you' (Qur'an 24:2)?

This [illegible] is intrinsic to all things only because it derives from the divine self-disclosure (*al-tajallî al-ilâhî*) to each and every existent thing. He created the existent things [illegible] worship and know Him.[28] But not one of His [illegible] would know Him unless He disclosed Himself to it, and then it [illegible] to know Him through itself. For no created thing [illegible] the capacity to know the Creator, as God said, 'We taught him knowledge from Us' (Qur'an 18:64).[29] Self-disclosure continues forever, witnessed by and manifest to [illegible] existent things, except the angels, mankind, and the *jinn*, since this constant self-disclosure belongs only to

that which has no rational speech (*nutq*), like all inanimate things and plants.[30]

As for those things which have been given rational speech and the ability to express what is in themselves – that is, the angels, mankind, and the *jinn* in respect of their governing spirits and their faculties – for them self-disclosure occurs from behind the veil of the [redacted] Hence [redacted] angels' knowledge derives from God's giving knowledge (*ta'rîf*), [redacted] from self-disclosure, while the knowledge of mankind and the *jinn* derives from consideration (*nazar*) and reasoning (*istidlâl*). But the knowledge possessed by their bodies and by [redacted] other created things derives from the divine self-disclosure.

This is because other creatures have an innate disposition to concealment, since they were not given verbal expression to convey knowledge. God desired to conceal this station [of self-disclosure to all things] [redacted] mercy to those for whom religion is prescribed, since He knew from the first that it would be prescribed for them, while He had ordained for them acts of disobedience. And for some of them He had ordained protest in that which [redacted] not seemly for them, like the angels, when they said, 'What, wilt Thou [redacted] therein one who will do corruption there?' (Qur'an 2:3).[31] Then there happened to them what happened in the story of Adam. That is why things were concealed from them. If they had disobeyed God by [His] decree and ordainment in spite of self-disclosure and witnessing, this would have been [redacted] tremendous lack of reverence and shame, so the retribution would have been tremendous and mercy would [redacted] have reached them. But since they disobeyed Him while affairs [redacted] concealed, they gained an argument with which to excuse themselves. Hence heedlessness and forgetfulness derive from the mercy which God appointed for His servants so that they might find through it an argument, should objections be made against them. Through it they find an excuse. Hence God did not make prescriptions for any of [redacted] creatures [redacted] the angels, mankind, and the *jinn*.[32]

As for other than these three, the continuity of self-disclosure bestows upon them intrinsic, continuous life. In their glorification they [redacted] like [redacted] in our breaths, constant and incessant without any hardship felt in breathing. On the contrary, our breaths are identical with ease. Or rather, if it were [redacted] for our breaths, we would die. Do you [redacted] see the person who is choked? When he is prevented from exhaling his breath, he dies and experiences pain. In such measure is the glorification of [redacted] things – if you have understood.

In reality, it is the Real who governs the cosmos, [redacted] God says, 'He governs the affair, [redacted] differentiates the signs' (13:2). The 'signs' are the proofs of the profession of His Unity: Each created thing gives [redacted] proof, specific to itself, of the Unity of Him who brought it into existence.

In each thing He has a sign
proving that He is One.

These [illegible] 'signs' which He 'differentiates', thereby dividing them among His creatures according [illegible] the innate dispositions which God [illegible] given [illegible] them.

So He is [illegible] spirit of the cosmos, its hearing, its sight, and its hand. Through Him the cosmos hears, through Him it [illegible] through Him [illegible] speaks, through Him it grasps, through Him it runs, since: 'There is no power and no strength save in God, the All-high, the Tremendous.'[33]

This is known only by those who draw near to God through supererogatory good works, just as has been mentioned in the [illegible] in [illegible] divine prophetic reports: When the servant draws near to Him through supererogatory works, He loves him, and when [illegible] loves him He says, 'I am his hearing, his sight, and his hand.' Another version has, 'for him I [illegible] hearing, sight, hand, and confirmer.'[34]

God's words 'I am' show that this [illegible] already the situation, but the [illegible] vant [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] Hence the generous gift which this nearness gives to him [illegible] the unveiling and knowledge that God is his hearing and his sight. He had been imagining that he hears through his [illegible] hearing, but [illegible] [illegible] hearing through his Lord. In the [illegible] way, during [illegible] life, man supposes that he hears through his spirit, because of his ignorance, but in actual fact he hears only through his Lord.

Do you not [illegible] what the veracious Prophet said concerning the People of the Well? 'You did not hear better than they.' This [illegible] when [illegible] addressed them with the words, 'Have you found [illegible] true what your Lord promised you?', even though they were corpses.[35] So there [illegible] [illegible] creatures that do not hear, but they are given innate dispositions which prevent them from conveying what they know and what they hear. This is the life that becomes manifest to the eyes of the creatures during the miraculous breaking of habits when the dead are brought to life, such as the [illegible] of Moses and other things.[36]

The [illegible] Manifest – if you verify it – is the cosmos, since the cosmos is to the Real as the body is to the governing spirit. And the name Non-manifest belongs to everything that is hidden from the existent things in the relationship of [illegible] to themselves. The human being exists through the whole, since he is defined [illegible] [illegible] 'rational animal'. His animality is his manifest form, since 'animality' denotes the [illegible] thing [illegible] 'a feeding and [illegible] body', though more briefly. The word 'animal' (*hayawân*) was preferred in the realm of verbal expression because of its abbreviated form, since it is equivalent in denotation. [illegible] is 'rational' (*nâtiq*) in respect of his supra-sensory reality (*ma'nâ*), and this reality is nothing other than what we mentioned. Hence in our view the whole cosmos, which consists of everything other [illegible] God, is [illegible] 'rational animal',

though its bodies, its feeding, and its sensations [redacted] diverse. [redacted] is manifest through its animal form and non-manifest through its intrinsic life which comes to exist through the divine self-disclosure, which exists continuously. Hence there is nothing in *wujûd*[37] [redacted] God, His [redacted] His acts. He is the First in respect to the [redacted] Manifest, and [redacted] the Last in respect to the name Non-manifest. So *wujûd* is all [redacted] (*haqq*). There [redacted] nothing of the unreal within it, since what is understood from applying the word 'unreal' (*bâtil*) is [redacted] of non-existence in that which [redacted] claims is an existence. So understand!

If this were [redacted] the case, the [redacted] alone would perform acts, [redacted] the divine power would not pervade [redacted] the possible things, or rather, the possibilities would vanish from the divine power. So glory be [redacted] the Manifest who is [redacted] hidden, and glory be to the Hidden who is not manifest! Through Him the [redacted] are veiled from knowing Him, and [redacted] made them blind through the intensity of His self-manifestation. Hence they [redacted] deniers, acknowledgers, waverers, bewildered, correct, mistaken. And praise belongs to God, who favoured [redacted] with such loci of witnessing and disclosed to our eyes these realities. Our eyes fall only upon Him, and we support ourselves only through Him. 'There is no god but He, the Inaccessible, the Wise' (3:18).

He who desires to know the reality of that to which we have been alluding in this problem should consider the images and forms on the screen (*sitâra*) [of the shadow play].[38] In the eyes of the small children far from the veil of the screen [redacted] between them [redacted] the person who manipulates the figures and speaks through them, who speaks within these forms? The situation is similar with the forms of the cosmos. The majority of people [redacted] these small children whom [redacted] have supposed, and you know from whence things come [redacted] them. The children in the gathering are happy and delighted. The heedless take it for [redacted] sport and diversion. The men of knowledge take heed and know that God [redacted] this up only as a likeness (*mathal*). That is why, at the beginning, a figure [redacted] known [redacted] the narrator (*wassâf*). He delivers [redacted] address in which he magnifies and praises God. Then he talks about each kind of form which will come out after him from behind the screen. The gathering comes to know that God has set this up as [redacted] likeness for His servants, in order that they might take heed and [redacted] to know that the cosmos is related [redacted] God just as these forms [redacted] related to their mover [redacted] that the [redacted] is [redacted] veil of the mystery of destiny. In spite of all this, the heedless take it as a sport and [redacted] diversion, as God says: 'Those who take their religion for [redacted] sport and a diversion' (Qur'an 6:69). Then the [redacted] away. [redacted] is like the first person existent [redacted] us, i.e. Adam. When [redacted] away, he went away from us to his Lord, behind the [redacted] of the Unseen. 'And God speaks [redacted] truth, and He guides on the way' (Qur'an 33:4).

CHAPTER 339
CONCERNING THE TRUE KNOWLEDGE OF A WAYSTATION IN WHICH THE SHARI'A KNEELS BEFORE THE REALITY, SEEKING REPLENISHMENT"

Introduction

The chapter begins with a poem that refers to the demands which are made upon human beings by the nature of their ontological situation; their vicegerency (*khilâfa*) makes their burden a heavy one – *noblesse oblige*.

The chapter then refers to the intimate relationship between the Shari'a and the Reality (*haqîqa*), which in this context denotes God inasmuch as He determines the Shari'a. In certain respects the Shari'a and the Reality are identical, as Ibn al-'Arabi has told us in an earlier chapter.[40] In another respect, the Shari'a follows the Reality, as this chapter points out. In order to understand the way in which the Shari'a follows the Reality, we need the knowledge possessed by perfect man. The station of 'animal man' (*al-insân al-hayawân*) – i.e. all human beings except the prophets and the very highest of the friends of God (*awliyâ' Allâh*) – does not allow insight into this mystery. This may explain why Ibn al-'Arabi turns immediately to discussing the station of perfect man, devoting the rest of the chapter to three of his characteristics: the divine form, the subjection of all things in the cosmos to him, and the 'openings' which are given to him inasmuch as he is an inheritor (*wârith*) of the Prophet.

Discussion of these characteristics will turn [illegible] to commentary on several Quranic verses: 2:30–31, concerning Adam's vicegerency; 31:20, concerning the subjection of all things to man, God's lavishing him with blessings, and those people who dispute about God without knowledge; and 48:1–2, concerning the 'opening' and 'inaccessible help' given to the Prophet. Note that the term 'opening' (*fath* or *futûh*) plays a major role in Ibn al-'Arabi's teachings and is present in its plural form in the word [illegible] itself.[41]

At the outset, Ibn al-'Arabi tells us that this chapter describes a waystation (*manzil*) in which the second of the 'banners of praise' (*alwiyat al-hamd*) is revealed to the spiritual traveller. This expression derives from a sound [illegible] in which the Prophet says that he will carry the banner of praise on the Day of Resurrection, and behind him will come Adam and all the other prophets and their followers. Ibn al-'Arabi defines the banner of praise as the [illegible] complete praise of God, around which all other praises gather, just as soldiers gather around the standard of the king.[42] This banner clearly alludes to [illegible]

fact that, Ibn al-'Arabi his followers put it, the Prophet is the most perfect of perfect men, the complete locus of manifestation for the of God. Ibn al-'Arabi the banner of praise with the 'praiseworthy station' (*maqâm mahmûd*) mentioned in the Qur'an (17:79), station which, the Prophet tells us in a sound *hadîth*, will be given him the Day of Resurrection.[43] Insight into this chapter's connection to the 'second' of the seven banners of praise can be gleaned from the beginning of the previous chapter of the *Futûhât* (Chapter 338), where Ibn al-'Arabi writes follows:

> In the Praiseworthy Station within which the Messenger of God will stand on Day of Resurrection, God has seven banners through His name Praiseworthy, and these are called the 'banners of praise'. The Messenger of God and his inheritors, the Muhammadans,[44] will be given, within these banners, the of God by which the Messenger will laud his Lord when he stands in the Praiseworthy Station the Day of Resurrection. This is referred by his words, when asked about intercession, 'I will praise God with words of praise which I know now.'[45] This praise is laudation of God with the required by that dwelling place.
>
> God is only through His Beautiful Names. His names encompassed in knowledge, for we know that in the Garden there is 'What no eye what no ear has heard, and what has never passed into the heart of any mortal;'[46] and we know that none of knows 'what comfort is laid up' for 'secretly' (Qur'an 32:17). All this is supported by that divine name through which it all becomes manifest when the name makes it manifest.[47] When He favours by making divine name manifest us, we necessarily know it and laud God through it and praise Him, whether this be laudation of glorification laudation of affirmation.[48]
>
> When I came to know this, I asked about the time appointed for the through which God will be praised the Day of Resurrection in the Praiseworthy Station. For I knew that I do not know those now and that God will teach them to me, since they words of praise which pertain exclusively to the Prophet the Day of Resurrection. But when we hear him praising Him with them on the Day of Resurrection in the Praiseworthy Station and when the banners are spread while the written upon them, then in that dwelling place we will to know them. It said to me as follows:
>
> 'The number of those names is 1,664. Each banner will have ninety-nine names written it – he who counts them there will enter the Garden.[49] However, of the banners will have 770 of these written upon it. The Prophet will praise God with all these words of praise, and each of them comprises the seeking of intercession with God.'
>
> When someone takes up residence in this waystation [i.e. the subject of the pre- chapter], among the things that he will be given is the witnessing of each of these banners and knowledge of all the within them; then this inheritor may laud God with them there [in that world]. And here [in this world] each of the ban- a waystation which the Prophet reached, which is reached by his inheritors, the perfect among his followers.[50]

The beginning of Chapter 339 [redacted] to suggest that it is the second in [redacted] series of chapters, but the above [redacted] rather explicitly that Chapter 338 deals with all [redacted] banners (though little [redacted] is said about them), while none of the other banners is mentioned in the several chapters immediately following 339.

Translation of Chapter 339

[This waystation derives] from the Muhammadan Presence. This is the waystation within which becomes manifest the second of the Banners of Praise, comprising ninety-nine divine [redacted]

> Prohibition arises from the stain of temporal origination –
> Say not, 'My vicegerency releases me.'
> Beware! Your vicegerency limits you!
> Where is release when the door of your engendered existence is open?
> The [redacted] lies behind the locks of your innate disposition.
> The keys [redacted] lost and the locks [redacted] undone.
> Do [redacted] rejoice in the expansion of your breast!
> It was expanded for you to know that limitations rule.[51]

Know (God confirm you, dear friend!) that people talk about the Shari'a and the Reality. God says to His Prophet, commanding him, 'Say, "My Lord, increase me in knowledge!" ' (Qur'an 20:113). He means knowledge of Him in respect of the fact that He possesses faces (*wujûh*) in every creature and every originated thing, and this is the knowledge of the Reality.[32] The Prophet did not seek increase in knowledge of the Shari'a. On the contrary, he used [redacted] say, 'Leave aside what I have left aside for you,'[33] The knowledge of the Shari'a is the knowledge of [redacted] way and [redacted] path. It demands a traveller (*sâlik*), and travelling is a hardship, but he wanted [redacted] reduction of that.

The ultimate end of the Shari'a's path is sensory felicity.[34] Its ultimate end is [redacted] the Reality in all cases, since [redacted] people reach the Reality in the first step they take in [redacted] Shari'a's path, for the face of the Real is found in every step. [redacted] the face of the [redacted] in every step is not unveiled to every person.

The Shari'a is that on the basis of which rulings (*hukm*) are made for those for whom it has been prescribed. [redacted] the Reality is the ruling concerning that through which rulings are made. The Shari'a comes to an end, while the Reality continues, since it subsists through the divine subsistence, while the Shari'a subsists through the divine bestowal of subsistence. Bestowal of subsistence will [redacted] abolished, but subsistence will [redacted] be abolished.

This waystation will show you the eminence of man [illegible] everyone in the heaven [illegible] the earth and [illegible] he is the [illegible] sought-after goal among the existent things, since it is he whom God has taken as [illegible] locus of self-disclosure (*tajallî*). I mean by 'man' perfect man, since he is perfect only through the form of the Real. In the [illegible] way [illegible] mirror, though complete (*tâmm*) in creation, is only perfect (*kâmil*) through the disclosure within it of the form of the looker. That is the 'level' of the mirror, and the level is the ultimate end. In the same way the Divinity is complete through the [illegible] which it demands from the divine thralls, so It lacks nothing, while [illegible] perfection – I mean the level of which It is worthy – is independence from the worlds. Hence [illegible] possesses non-delimited perfection through independence from the worlds.[55]

God willed to give His perfection its due (*haqq*), and [illegible] this always. He created the cosmos to glorify Him in praise, [illegible] for anything else. The glorification (*tasbîh*) is God's, while the glorifier does [illegible] possess the [illegible] of witnessing (*shuhûd*), since it is annihilated [*fanâ'*] from witnessing. [illegible] the cosmos does not lag in glorification for the blink of [illegible] eye, since its glorification is inherent (*dhâtî*), like the breathing of [illegible] breather. This shows that the cosmos never ceases being veiled and it seeks witnessing through that glorification.

[Since God willed to give perfection its due,] He created perfect man upon His own form and gave [illegible] to the angels about his level. [illegible] told them that he is the vicegerent in the [illegible] and that his home is the earth.[56] He appointed the earth his abode, since [illegible] created him from it. He made the Higher Plenum busy with him in heaven and earth, since 'He subjected' to him 'what is in the heavens and what is in the earth, all together, for him' (Qur'an 45:12), that is, for his sake. Then God veiled Himself, for the deputy (*nâ'ib*) has no property when He who has made him vicegerent is manifest. So 'He is veiled from insights, just [illegible] He is veiled from sight'. The Messenger of God, addressing people who resembled [illegible] in sensory form but who stood below the level of perfection, said, 'God is veiled from insights just as He is veiled from sight; the Higher Plenum seeks Him just [illegible] you yourselves seek Him.'[57] 'Sight perceives Him not' (Qur'an 6:103), and, in the [illegible] way, insights perceive Him not. 'Insights' [illegible] rational faculties, which perceive Him [illegible] with their reflections, so they are incapable of reaching and winning the object they seek.

'And [illegible] taught Adam the names, all of them' (2:31). He commanded him to teach the Higher Plenum. He commanded everything in the heavens and the earth to look after that which [illegible] appropriate for this deputy, since [illegible] subjected [illegible] him everything in the heavens and [illegible] earth, [illegible] that which is called 'man' in respect of his completeness, [illegible] in respect of his perfection.[58] As long as this kind which shares the name 'man' with perfect man does not attain to perfection, he is one of

those who [redacted] subjected to the perfect one who, through his perfection, is joined to Him who is Independent of the worlds. [redacted] alone – I mean perfect [redacted] – worships his Lord who is Independent of him. Perfect man's perfection is that his Lord is not without need for him, [redacted] there is no [redacted] who worships Him outside the mode of glorification but perfect man, since he receives self-disclosure constantly, and the property of witnessing never leaves him. Hence he is the [redacted] perfect of existent things in knowledge of God and the most constant of them in witnessing.

Perfect man has two visions (*nazar*) of the Real, which is why He appointed for him two eyes. With [redacted] eye he looks upon Him in respect [redacted] the fact that He is Independent of the worlds. So he sees Him neither in any thing nor in himself. Through the other eye [redacted] looks upon Him in respect of His [redacted] All-merciful, which seeks the [redacted] and is sought by [redacted] cosmos. [redacted] [redacted] His Being permeating all things. Through the vision of this eye [redacted] is poor toward everything in respect [redacted] the fact that the things [redacted] the [redacted] of God, not in respect of their own entities. Hence, [redacted] is poorer toward the [redacted] than perfect man, since he witnesses it subjected [redacted] himself.[59] He knows that if he did not need the cosmos, those things that are subjected to him would not have been subjected to him. He knows in himself that he is more in need of the cosmos than the cosmos is in need of him. His all-inclusive poverty stands in the station of the all-inclusive divine Independence. In respect of poverty, he takes up a position in the cosmos like the position of the Real in respect to the divine names, which demand the displaying of effects in the cosmos. [redacted] only becomes manifest in his poverty by the manifestation of the names of the Real.

Perfect man is the Real in his independence from the cosmos, since the [redacted] has been subjected for his sake by the divine names that display their effects within it. Nothing is subjected to him except that which possesses the display of effects, without respect to the entity of the cosmos. So he is poor only toward God.

Perfect man is also the Real in his poverty toward the cosmos. He knows that God subjected the cosmos to man only to distract the things, through the subjection imposed upon them, from seeking knowledge in respect [redacted] witnessing, for that does [redacted] belong to them, since they stand below the level of perfection. Therefore perfect man manifests need for that in which the cosmos has been subjected. Thereby subjection in the [redacted] grows stronger, that they may not neglect that of it which the Real commanded them to perform; for 'They disobey not God in what He commands them' (66:6).[60] By making manifest this poverty, perfect [redacted] conforms [redacted] the Real in keeping the [redacted] distracted.

Hence perfect man is the [redacted] in his poverty, like the names, and the Real in his independence, since he does not [redacted] that which is subjected to him, only that which possesses effects. In other words, he [redacted] the

divine names, not the entities of the [redacted] Hence he is poor toward God only within the entities of the cosmos, while the [redacted] knows nothing of that.

'Heaven moans', because of its inhabitants. The Prophet said, 'It [redacted] a right to moan. There is not a span of it without an angel prostrating itself to God.'[41] He said 'prostrating itself to God' to indicate that [redacted] vision of every angel in the heaven is toward the earth, since prostration is to make oneself low. The angels know that the earth is the location of [redacted] vicegerent and that they [redacted] commanded to prostrate themselves [before him]. So they lowered themselves [redacted] God's command, gazing toward the place of this vicegerent, [redacted] that the prostration would be before him, since God commanded them to prostrate themselves before him. The property of prostration toward Adam and perfect man continues within them forever without [redacted]

You may object: Things like this prostration will disappear in the [redacted] world. We answer: It will [redacted] disappear, since the prostration takes place toward the outward form of perfect man, [redacted] form which God configures from elemental [redacted] both [redacted] the beginning and [redacted] the return. At the beginning He made it 'grow up from the earth'; then through death He 'returns it to it'; then He 'brings it forth' from the earth [redacted] the Uprising (Qur'an 71:16–17). This form has lowness (*sufl*) in level. Through this reality it seeks God, about whom the Prophet said, 'If you let down a rope, it will [redacted] upon God.'[42] And such [redacted] be the situation in itself. So the angels must be constantly in prostration to the Imam in this world and the next.[43]

Perfect man possesses the form of the cosmos and the form of the Real, and through the whole he gains his superiority. The prostrater and that to which the prostration takes place are in him and from him. Were the situation not like this, he would not be all-comprehensive (*jâmi'*).[44] Hence within the Higher Plenum there is a crowding to see perfect man, just [redacted] people crowd [redacted] the vision of an angel when it comes upon them suddenly. Hence heaven moans because of their crowding.

[redacted] who knows God through this knowledge knows both the outward and the inward blessings which God has showered down upon him.[45] Hence he declares himself quit of disputing about God 'without knowledge', i.e. that which is given by considerative proof, and 'without an illuminating book', i.e. those attributes of the Real concerning which communication has [redacted] Hence God says, 'Among [redacted] [redacted] those that dispute about God without knowledge,' given to him by a proof of his reflection, 'or guidance', i.e. without clarification received through his unveiling, 'or an illuminating book' (Qur'an 22:8). This is knowledge of God communicated through signs [redacted] down in His revealed books, which [redacted] described [redacted] light, so that through them that with which they [redacted] sent down [redacted] be unveiled – since through 'light' unveiling takes

place. Hence from these people He negated following the authority of the Real, self-disclosure and unveiling, [redacted] rational consideration. There is no level of ignorance lower than this.[66] Hence this level has come from God [redacted] the object of blame, whereby He blames everyone who possesses such an attribute.

But, when they know the blessings of God – [redacted] said – this knowledge makes thanksgiving incumbent upon them. Hence they occupy themselves with giving thanks, as did the Messenger of God when it [redacted] revealed to him, '. . . that God may forgive thee thy sins, the former [redacted] the latter, and complete His blessing upon thee, and guide thee [redacted] straight path, and that God may help thee with inaccessible help' (Qur'an 48:1-2). He stayed on his feet giving thanks for this blessing until his feet became swollen. Such did [redacted] report when something [redacted] to him about this, for he said, 'Should I not be a truly thankful (*shakûr*) servant?'[67] [redacted] employed the form *fa'ûl* [in *shakûr*], which indicates going to great lengths. So his acts of thanksgiving were many, because the blessings were many. Each blessing demanded from him that he give thanks [redacted] God for it.

It does not occur to the possessor of this station to seek increase in his thanksgiving, since thanksgiving is [redacted] act which demands the past and the actual. Hence, the thanksgiver's reception of increase in blessings is [redacted] bounty from God. That is why He named it an increase demanded by the thanksgiving, not by the thanksgiver, though its fruit is [redacted] by the thanksgiver. It is [redacted] recompense from the thanksgiving to the thanksgiver, for he has brought the entity of thanksgiving into existence and made its configuration an embodied form, glorifying and mentioning God. Hence this form asks God to [redacted] blessings to the blessings of this thanksgiver, since he [redacted] the [redacted] for the bringing of the entity of thanksgiving into existence. God listens to it and complies with its request. So the thanksgiving asks God to let the thanksgivers know about that, so that they will know that the thanksgiving will fulfil with God the right which the thanksgiver has upon it.[68] Hence God says to His servants, 'If you are thankful, surely I will increase you' (Qur'an 14:7), thereby telling us about the increase.

The knower of God thanks God in order to create the form of thanksgiving constantly; thereby he makes the glorifiers of God, those who perform His worship, more numerous. When God knows this from him, He increases him in outward and inward blessings, so that he may possess the attribute of creating thanksgiving without [redacted] This situation belongs to him constantly in this world and the next.

The greatest plane through which thanksgiving becomes manifest within existence is the plane of thanksgiving for the blessing of the Form of Perfection and the plane of thanksgiving for the blessing of subjection. Increase from God [redacted] the thanksgiver accords with the [redacted]

of the form of the thanksgiving. So know how you give thanks and occupy yourself with the [redacted] important of it, then the [redacted] important!

When through his thanksgiving the thanksgiver seeks increase because of what God has promised, God gives him nothing of the blessing of increase except in the [redacted] and form of his seeking, i.e. whether it is mixed [redacted] flawless. [redacted] increase will [redacted] forgiveness, a pardon, [redacted] a passing over, nothing else. In short, such [redacted] person is lower in degree than the first – who [redacted] given [increase] [redacted] a result of thanksgiving's asking [God to give it [redacted] him] – because in itself the plane of thanksgiving is free of mixture. If the thanksgiver mixes, his mixing will have [redacted] effect upon the form of the thanksgiving. But it has an effect upon the increase, if he gives thanks to acquire increase. So ranking in degrees is established among the thanksgivers [redacted] [redacted] have described: those who seek increase and those who do not seek it, those who occupy themselves with the [redacted] important, and those who do [redacted] occupy themselves with it. These are diverse paths to God, as He said: 'To every [redacted] of you We have appointed [redacted] right way and [redacted] open road' (Qur'an 5:52), i.e. the paths. The Reality is One Entity which is the ultimate aim of these paths, [redacted] indicated by His words, 'To Him the whole affair will [redacted] returned' (Qur'an 11:123).

Let us [redacted] turn to His words to His prophet Muhammad in the chapter of 'Opening' (*fath*) (Qur'an 48). This is the opening of unveiling through the Real, the opening of [redacted] in the inward dimension, and the opening of expression.[9] Through this last opening the Qur'an was an inimitable miracle (*mu'jiza*). No one [redacted] given the opening of expression in the perfection that it [redacted] given to the Messenger of God, for He says, 'If men and *jinn* banded together to produce [redacted] like of this Qur'an, they would nover produce its like, not though they backed,' [i.e. helped] 'one another' (Qur'an 17:90).

He says to the Prophet, 'Surely We have opened for thee [redacted] clear opening' (Qur'an 48:1), through the three kinds of opening. He says, 'opening', using the verbal noun for emphasis. And 'clear', i.e. manifest: Whoever sees it will recognize it through that which discloses itself and that which it comprises. The opening of expression is established for the Arabs because [redacted] [redacted] is capable of protesting [against the Qur'an's linguistic perfection]. The opening of unveiling is established through the signs that [redacted] shown to him on the night of his ascension.

'That God may forgive thee thy sins, the former,' and thus conceal thee from the blame and the taking to task for which the possessor of sins is worthy, 'and the latter' (48:2), thereby concealing thee from sin itself so that it may not find thee and stand up through thee. [redacted] let us know through the forgiveness of the latter sins that the Prophet is inerrant (*ma'sûm*), without doubt. What confirms his inerrancy is that God

made him an example to be emulated. If God [redacted] not placed him in the station of inerrancy, it would be necessary for [redacted] to emulate the sins that he committed if there [redacted] no text concerning them, like the text He provided concerning 'marriage by gift' (*al-nikâh bi'l-hiba*). This belongs exclusively to him according to the revealed Law, while it is unlawful for us.[70]

'And complete His blessing upon thee' (48:2), by giving His blessing its creation, since He has told us about the 'fully created' and the 'not fully created' kinds, [redacted] gives news through this verse that the blessing He gave [redacted] 'fully created', i.e. complete in its creation.[71]

'And guide thee upon a straight path' (48:2). This is the path upon which is his Lord, as Hud says, 'Verily my Lord is upon a straight path' (Qur'an 11:59). All the revealed laws [redacted] lights, but among those lights the revealed law of Muhammad is like the light of the sun among the light of the stars. When the sun is manifest, the lights of the [redacted] hidden within the sun's light. Their hiddenness is equivalent to that of the revealed laws which is abrogated through his revealed law, [redacted] though their entities continue to exist, just [redacted] the existence of the lights of the [redacted] is verified. That is why [redacted] obligated in our all-inclusive Law to have faith in all messengers and [redacted] revealed laws. They are true, so they do not become false through abrogation – that is the opinion of those who are ignorant.[72] [redacted] all the paths go back to looking toward the path of the Prophet. For if the messengers had lived in his time, they would have followed him, [redacted] their revealed laws would follow his revealed law, since he was given the all-comprehensive words.[73]

'And that God may help thee with inaccessible help' (48:2). The 'inaccessible' is something desired that cannot be reached. Since the messengers are those who seek [redacted] reach him, his inaccessibility does [redacted] allow them [redacted] grasp him, because of his all-inclusive mission, God's bestowing the all-comprehensive words upon him, his lordship through the Praiseworthy Station in the next abode,[74] and God's making his community 'the best community [redacted] brought forth to mankind' (Qur'an 3:106) – for the community of every prophet is in the [redacted] of the station of its prophet. So know that!

When those who maintain that prophethood can be earned sought [redacted] reach him, he [redacted] inaccessible to them.[75] The only thing that [redacted] be earned is travelling and reaching the door. As for what lies beyond the door, those who reach the door have [redacted] knowledge of him for whom it has been opened. Among mankind are those for whom it is opened because of an all-inclusive faith – which is the clear vision of [redacted] Reality – like Abu Bakr, since [redacted] anything without seeing God before it. Among them are those for whom it is opened through an all-inclusive news-giving within which there is [redacted] Law. These two openings will remain in this community until the Day of Resurrection. Among

those who reach the door are those who have it opened for them through ■ prophecy of Law-giving (*tashrî'*) restricted ■ themselves, while others have ■ opened through ■ messengerhood that gives a revealed Law [for others as well]. But God has forbidden anyone from reaching these two doors – ■ openings – or having them opened for him except the people of independent effort (*ijtihâd*), since God has caused something of that to remain for them, as affirmed by the revealed Law.[76] Hence its property belongs to the Law-giver, not to themselves.

Nothing that comes out from behind the door after it is opened has been earned. Prophethood is not earned. Hence 'God' helped him 'with inaccessible help', so he who maintains that prophethood is earned cannot reach him. For, when someone is described ■ inaccessible, this 'inaccessibility' can only have an entity along with the existence of someone seeking the attribute of him in whom ■ dwells. So his station and presence ■ guarded against ■ seeker reaching it.

The Laws (*sharâ'i'*) based ■ wisdom (*hikamî*) and government policy (*siyâsî*) that become manifest in the form of divine Laws (*al-sharâ'i' al-ilâhiyya*) do not possess this inaccessible help.[77] It belongs exclusively to the possessor of the divine revealed Law. Reality embraces both Laws, the divine Law and that based on wisdom and government policy. Hence he who possesses the Shari'a - i.e. the person of faith – kneels only before the Verifier, who possesses the Reality, that the latter may explain to him the source of every Law within the Divine Presence.[78] None knows this but the Possessor of the Reality. That is why this waystation is called 'the Shari'a's Kneeling Before the Reality', since every Law seeks the Reality, since it is the inward dimension of every Law, while the Laws ■ its outward forms in the visible world. Hence there has been no community without ■ ■ who established its government policy for the sake of the subsistence of its best interest. Whether the Law is divine or based on government policy, the best interest is achieved through it in the generation within which it becomes manifest.

Now that you have ■ to distinguish the waystation of the Shari'a from that of the Reality – and to this is devoted one of the earlier chapters of this book[79] – let ■ mention the sciences comprised within this waystation:[80]

Among these is the science of ■ specific banner of praise and its names, and the science of the property of this banner's mercy upon ■ world under it.

Among them is the science of the interrelationships (*munâsabât*) which put formal things into order among themselves ■ that the entities of certain forms may be established which would not become manifest without this order (*intizâm*). These are the forms which give to the observer the knowledge of their very essence.

Within this waystation is the science of giving knowledge through the waymarks (*a'lâm*) [illegible] upon the path for the travellers upon it so that they will [illegible] go astray from their goal, which is the ultimate end of their path.

Within it is the science of the kinds of provisions (*rizq*), since these [illegible] diverse in keeping with the diversity of those who [illegible] provided.

Within it is the science of the profit of the reports (*akhbâr*) through expressions which are given by the contexts of the situations. [illegible] knowledge through that report acquired from the report, from the [illegible] texts (*qarâ'in*) of the situations, or from the totality? Or, is the knowledge given by the context of the situation different from the knowledge given by the report? Or, are the two brought together in [illegible] place and not brought together in another?

Within it is the science of the difference between the taking enjoyment (*istimtâ'*) which occurs through understanding and [that which [illegible] through] something else; and the difference between him who is 'he is he' and him who is 'as if he were he' (Qur'an 27:42).

Within it is the science of the recompense (*jazâ'*) specific to each one who is recompensed.

Within it is the science of the general science whose ultimate end (*ghâya*) is works, and another whose ultimate end is not works.

Within it is the science of the relationship of the cosmos to the Real [illegible] specific way.

Within it is the science of the sciences which [illegible] produced by reflective thoughts (*afkâr*) within the hearts of the reflective thinkers.

Within it is the science of the stipulation of blessings (*taqrîr al-niʿam*).

Within it is the science of that for which the cosmos was created and of the cause for that which has come between it and that for which it [illegible] created, even while that for which it [illegible] created is known, and there is nothing stronger than knowledge, since it possesses all-encompassing- [illegible] Hence the resistance of the cosmos lies within the compass of knowledge. So from whence does it come?

Within it is the science distinguishing between him who is [illegible] of the people of the command (*amr*) and him who is not.

Within it is the science of the ontological, all-pervading friendship (*walâya*) through which the wrongdoers [illegible] friends of one another, the people of faith [illegible] friends of [illegible] another, and God is the friend of the people of faith (*muʾminîn*), since He is the Faithful (*muʾmin*). So from whence is [illegible] the friend of the self-protectively pious (*muttaqîn*), since [illegible] is not described by self-protective piety (*taqwâ*)? Or, is [illegible] described by self-protective piety in the respect that He takes the *jinn* and mankind as [illegible] protection (*wiqâya*) through which He protects Himself from the ascription to Him of blameworthy attributes, both in [illegible] usage and according [illegible] the Law? Hence these attributes are ascribed to the *jinn* and

mankind, who [redacted] protection through which He protects Himself against this ascription. So [redacted] is the friend of the self-protectively pious in respect of His being self-protectively pious. Since [redacted] is their friend, there is [redacted] but the self-protectively pious. This is good [redacted] from God [redacted] everyone concerning the all-inclusiveness of mercy [redacted] help against wrath, for God is the Friend, the Helper. So understand!

Within it is the science of the levels (*marâtib*) in relation [redacted] the Law specifically, not the levels required by existence.

Within it is the science of the Greatest God (*al-ilâh al-a'zam*) who [redacted] down as law taking gods (*âliha*) other than God (Allah).

Within it is the science of bewilderment (*hayrah*) over that concerning which you have certain knowledge. Knowledge is the opposite of bewilderment in [redacted] object of knowledge, [redacted] what can have caused your bewilderment, given your knowledge?

Within it is the science of the negation of guidance (*hidâya*) from the cosmos, in spite of His words, '[He created man,] He taught him the explication' (Qur'an 55:4), and that is guidance itself.

Within it is the science that distinguishes Time (*al-dahr*) from time (*al-zamân*).

Within it is the science of the middlemost bringing together (*jam'*). For bringing together becomes manifest in three locations: in the taking [redacted] the Covenant (*akhdh al-mîthâq*), in the *barzakh* between this world and the next, and in the bringing together in the Uprising after death. There is [redacted] all-inclusive bringing together after this, since after the Resurrection each abode is independent along with its inhabitants. Hence the worlds of mankind and the *jinn* never again come together after this bringing together.

Within it is the science of the sects (*nihal*) and the creeds (*umam*) and the science of the all-inclusiveness of the rational speech (*nutq*) pervading the whole [redacted] Rational speech is [redacted] the specific characteristic of man as imagined by those who make his constituting differentia the fact that he is a rational animal. Unveiling does [redacted] allow that [redacted] possess this definition exclusively. Man is defined specifically by the Divine Form. [redacted] who does not possess this definition is not a man. Rather he is [redacted] animal whose form resembles the outward appearance of man. So seek [redacted] definition for the one who has this description, just as you seek it for the other animals!

Within it is the science of the reality of abrogation (*naskh*). Does it or does it not happen among entities – so that it is then called metamorphosis (*maskh*) – just [redacted] it happens among [religious] rulings (*ahkâm*)?

Within it is the science of the levels of triumph (*fawz*) – for there is [redacted] non-delimited triumph, [redacted] triumph delimited by I-ness [?] (*anâna*), and one delimited by tremendousness (*'azama*) – as well [redacted] [the science] of what is the definition of each of them.

Within it is the science of rightful claims (*istihqâq*).

Within it is the science of certainty, knowledge, conjecture, ignorance, doubt, and consideration.

Within it is the science distinguishing between the property of witnessing (*shuhûd*) [illegible] the property of knowledge.

Within it is the science of the [illegible] with whom God is [illegible] pleased – if He has mercy upon him, He does not have mercy upon him [illegible] of good pleasure (*ridâ*) – and of the difference between the object of mercy along with good pleasure and the object of mercy without good pleasure; and of where the stations of each of the two are located within the two abodes.

Within [illegible] the science of magnificence (*kibriyâ'*) [illegible] invincibility (*jabarût*). [illegible] will their all-pervadingness in the [illegible] become manifest such that [illegible] will be recognized exactly? Right [illegible] it is manifest, but only [illegible] few people know it. 'And God speaks the truth, and He guides on the way' (Qur'an 33:4).

NOTES

1. We will also lose something, and I am the first to acknowledge this. Much of my earlier research [illegible] devoted to Ibn al-'Arabi's [illegible] influential disciple, Sadr al-Din Qunawi, [illegible] well as other commentators like 'Abd al-Rahman Jami. I still consider study of these figures [illegible] of great importance for understanding [illegible] full significance of Ibn al-'Arabi's teachings – especially in their historical extension. The various commentators have much to teach us for many reasons, not the least of these being their involvement with the oral transmission of Ibn al-'Arabi's teachings, their 'verification' (*tahqîq*) of his teachings through the spiritual practices which accompanied the oral transmission, and the monumental intellectual effort they devoted to putting Ibn al-'Arabi's teachings into logical and coherent order.
2. [illegible] M. Notcutt, 'Ibn 'Arabi: A Handlist of Printed Materials: Part I', *Journal of the Muhyiddin* [illegible] *'Arabi Society* III, 1984, p. 58.
3. *Futûhât* III 65–8.
4. [illegible] al-'Arabi often formulates these [illegible] kinds of worship, known as intrinsic worship and accidental worship, in [illegible] of the 'engendering command' and [illegible] 'prescriptive command' (cf. *Sufi Path* pp. 291–4, 311–12).
5. The last of these [illegible] is especially interesting, since [illegible] words 'until [illegible] know' imply that God [illegible] [illegible] know until He tries [illegible] Ibn al-'Arabi points out, however, [illegible] since God in [illegible] infinite knowledge knows all things in detail, what is really [illegible] issue here is [illegible] argument (*hujja*) against [illegible] on the Last Day. We will not be able to make any claims of innocence, since we will recognize that [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] in [illegible] fair trial through which [illegible] tested [illegible] (cf. the [illegible] III 134:21).
6. On these points, cf. *Sufi Path* pp. 15–17.
7. The Imam of the Left manifests the [illegible] King, a name which, [illegible] pointed out

above, is alluded to in the two Quranic verses being commented upon in this chapter. The Imams of the Left and of the Right are the viziers of the Pole (*qutb*). As Ibn al-'Arabi points [illegible] in Chapter 270, the three stand [illegible] the [illegible] of [illegible] hierarchy of the [illegible] (*al-rijâl*), those human beings who have attained to high degrees of spiritual realization and have certain functions to play in maintaining [illegible] order of the [illegible] (Ibn al-'Arabi describes this hierarchy in great detail in Chapter 73 of the *Futûhât*). A comprehensive and concise description of the relationship between the [illegible] Imams is found at the beginning of *Manzil al-qutb* (in *Rasâ'il Ibn 'Arabi*) (Hyderabad-Deccan: The *Da'iratu 'l-Ma'ârifu 'l* - Osmania, 1948), where the Imam of the Left is connected [illegible] the name Lord [illegible] the Imam of [illegible] Right to the King. [illegible] in [illegible] *Futûhât* (II 571.26) [illegible] *Mawâqi' al-nujûm* (Cairo: Muhammad 'Al Sabih, 1965, p. 139), [illegible] al-'Arabi [illegible] the [illegible] to which the two Imams are connected, making the Imam of the Left manifest the [illegible] King. This accords with [illegible] *Futûhât* II 573, where Ibn al-'Arabi connects the [illegible] of the Left with the divine [illegible] of majesty and severity, both of which [illegible] kingly attributes, demanding the [illegible] [illegible] strictness implied by testing and trial. The relationship between the two Imams can be summarized briefly [illegible] follows: the Imam of the Left stands in the station of majesty and intimacy, [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] King, [illegible] keeps [illegible] visible cosmos in order, while being the 'sword' of the Pole. The [illegible] of the Right [illegible] the name Lord and is concerned with the world of the disengaged spirits. The Imam of the Left is the higher of the [illegible] and will succeed the Pole [illegible] his death. For a discussion of the Imams in the broad [illegible] of the Men of God, cf. M. Chodkiewicz, *Le Sceau des saints* Gallimard, Paris; 1986, Chapter 6.

8. Bodies of fire belong to the *jinn*, those of earth to human beings and animals, [illegible] those of light to the angels.
9. Like al-Ghazali in *Mishkât al-anwâr* and many other Muslim thinkers, Ibn al-'Arabi frequently comments upon this famous 'light verse' (cf. indexes of Quranic verses in *Les Illuminations* [illegible] *Sufi Path*). On Ibn al-'Arabi's teaching that the [illegible] and 'the God' demand one another and [illegible] inconceivable apart from one another, cf. *Sufi Path* p. [illegible] and passim. As is made clear in that work, Ibn al-'Arabi [illegible] suggests that this correlativity of the two [illegible] compromises the independence of the Divine Essence (on which point, see the fourth paragraph of Chapter 339, translated below).
10. God is the 'Light of the heavens [illegible] earth.' According to [illegible] definition of light offered by Ibn al-'Arabi, it is 'any divine inrush which dispels engendered existence from the heart' (*Sufi Path* pp. 214–15); the opposite of 'engendered existence' (*kawn*) is the Divine Being. Light indeed is identical with the Divine Reality; to perceive it is to perceive God. On light and the witnessing (*shuhûd*) of God, cf. *Sufi Path*, Chapter 13.
11. For a similar [illegible] cf. *Les Illuminations* p. [illegible] The 'reports' [illegible] various *hadîths* and Quranic [illegible] which demand that the things in question [illegible] alive, unless [illegible] 'interprets' (*ta'wîl*) the [illegible] away – in the manner constantly [illegible] demned by Ibn al-'Arabi – by making them metaphors [illegible] symbols. Among the reports Ibn al-'Arabi [illegible] in view [illegible] the words of God [illegible] the heavens and the earth, 'Come willingly [illegible] unwillingly.' They replied, the Qur'an tells us, by saying 'We [illegible] willingly' (41:11). On Ibn al-'Arabi's critical [illegible] toward *ta'wîl*, [illegible] which he alludes in the next paragraph, cf. *Sufi Path*, Chapter 12 [illegible] passim.

12. *'Aql* intelligence is often used in the sense of knowledge, which in any [redacted] and consciousness, [redacted] here Ibn al-'Arabi may be adding this proviso in order not to [redacted] discussion of *'aql* [redacted] attribute which is the defining and specific characteristic of human beings.
13. The [redacted] 'kingdom' is often used together with 'dominion' (*malakût*), in which [redacted] two words refer to the two basic worlds which make up the cosmos: the visible [redacted] invisible, or spiritual and corporeal. Here the term is clearly used to refer [redacted] everything owned by God, who is, in Quranic terms, both King (*al-malik*, 59:23) and Owner of the Kingdom (*malik al-mulk*, 3:26).
14. Cf. *Sufi Path* p. 393, [redacted] 13.
15. 'Relationship' (*nisba*) is [redacted] of [redacted] al-'Arabi's key terms, often, [redacted] here, juxtaposed with 'entity' (*'ayn*). Every divine attribute (*sifa*) or [redacted] (*ism*) specifies a relationship between God [redacted] something else, [redacted] hence Ibn al-'Arabi [redacted] the expression as [redacted] synonym for these two terms. As soon [redacted] [redacted] discuss anything, we are discussing its entity or essence (*dhât*), which cannot be perceived [redacted] itself – since ultimately that is none other than the Divine Essence, the Unknow- [redacted] – and the qualities or characteristics which it displays. These invariably [redacted] up relationships with other things. In the last analysis, all relationships – [redacted] entities – go back to God. In all cases, the entities in themselves are identical with *wujûd* or Being/existence, while the relationships merely describe the relative situation of various entities and do not exist in themselves; hence they are 'non-existent' (*'adam*). In the specific example which Ibn al-'Arabi is discussing in the [redacted] paragraph, human beings exist as entities (whether they be alive or dead), but 'life' [redacted] 'death' [redacted] [redacted] different relationships which [redacted] attributed to them according to various situations.
16. 'Everything other than God' is the [redacted] definition of cosmos.
17. Apparently this [redacted] is parenthetical, describing life and [redacted] not [redacted] relationships (as they are discussed earlier and in the next paragraph) but [redacted] intrinsic attributes of entities and relationships, since [redacted] which (truly) exists is alive, while that which does not exist has no life.
18. The connection between sleep and death is immediate in Islamic thought. The Prophet said, 'Sleep is the brother of death,' while the Quranic basis for this connection is the verse, 'God takes the souls at the time of their death, and [redacted] which has not died, in its sleep . . .'(39:42).
19. Most Qur'an commentators read the word *sûr* as 'trumpet', and explain that it [redacted] be blown by the angel Seraphiel. [redacted] a minority have suggested that the word should be read [redacted] 'forms'. Although the usual plural of 'form' is *suwar*, [redacted] authorities maintain that *sûr* can also be its plural, or [redacted] collective noun (cf. Fakhr al-Din Razi, *al-Tafsîr al-kabîr*, commentary on Qur'an 6:73; Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, under *sûr*). Ten Quranic verses mention the 'trumpet' (or [redacted] 'forms') always in connection with the verb *nafkh*, which means to blow. For example, 'Upon that day . . . [redacted] Trumpet shall be blown,' which, according to the minority interpretation, would be [redacted] '. . . the forms [redacted] [redacted] blown into' (18:99). The Qur'an employs the term *nafkh* in three other connections, two of which [redacted] highly significant for the present discussion: The Qur'an refers to [redacted] [redacted] [redacted] spirit, 'blown into' [redacted] Virgin Mary (21:91, 66:12), while Jesus brings [redacted] [redacted] [redacted] [redacted] by 'blowing' into it (3:49, 5:110). (As pointed out above, [redacted] al-'Arabi discusses Jesus in connection with the spirit in the *Fusûs*). The Qur'an

refers to God's 'blowing' of His spirit into Adam after He moulded his body out of clay (15:29, 32:9, 38:72). addition, the Qur'an the 'form-giver' (*al-musawwir*) and, addressing man, tells that God 'created you, proportioned you, balanced you, and composed you after whatever form He would' (82:7–8). Hence Ibn al-'Arabi has strong traditional basis for making connection between *sûr* and 'forms'. Nevertheless, he takes this reading as 'allusion' (*ishâra*) rather than definitive interpretation. Hence, for example, he the masculine single pronoun to refer to *sûr* in this passage, thereby showing that he is reading it mean 'Trumpet'. He was perfectly of prophetic *hadîths* which explain *sûr* 'horn' (*qarn*), the remainder of the discussion shows. In the present context, the *barzakh* is the World of Imagination inasmuch it is experienced after death and before the Resurrection, when human beings forms in keeping with their character traits. For discussion of the 'Trumpet', cf. *Sufi Path*, pp. 122–3. On the *barzakh* after death, cf. Chittick, 'Death and the World of Imagination: Ibn al-'Arabi's Eschatology', *The Muslim World* 78 (1988), pp. 51–82; *Sufi Path*, passim; *Les Illuminations*, passim.

20. One sound *hadîth* tells as follows: 'The life-breath of the person of faith will be bird perching on the of the Garden until it to body the Day of Resurrection' (Ibn Maja, Zuhd 32; Nasa'i, Jana'iz 117, etc.). 'Green' birds mentioned in another sound *hadîth*, referring to the situation of martyrs after death: 'Their spirits inside green birds . . .' (Muslim, Imara 122, etc.).
21. Note that, in rather typical fashion, Ibn al-'Arabi rejects this interpretation of the horn – attributing it to 'our companions' – in earlier in the *Futûhât*, where he says the low end is wide the high end Cf. *Sufi Path* p. 123.
22. In a similar way Avicenna suggests those who attribute in transmigration the Greek philosophers mistaken; the latter in fact referring through imagery to the base character traits which come to dominate people in the next life when they fail to perfect their intellects in this life (cf. *Tarjama-yi risâla-yi adhawiyya*, ed. H. Khadiw-jam, Bunyâd-i Farhang, Tehran, (1350/1971), pp. 13, 51).
23. The 'poverty' of the cosmos is what the philosophers and often Ibn al-'Arabi himself refer, to its 'possibility' (*imkân*). Cf. *Sufi Path* pp. 81–3 and passim.
24. For *al-ghafûr* and similar names in this meaning, cf. *Sufi Path*, index under *maghfira*.
25. Several Quranic refer to this, such as 24:24, 36:65.
26. Ibn al-'Arabi probably has in mind the following *hadîth*: 'By Him in whose hand is my soul, the Hour will before wild animals speak human beings, the tip of man's whip and strap of his sandal speak to him, and thigh gives him news of what his wife will do after him' (Tirmidhî, Fitan 19).
27. One of the *hadîths* Ibn al-'Arabi has in mind is the following: 'The Hour will not until the Muslims fight the Jews. The Muslims will slay them, until the Jew conceals himself behind rocks and trees. The rock or the tree will say, "O Muslim, O of God, there is a Jew behind me, so and slay him" – except for the thornbush, since it is a tree of the Jews' (Muslim, Fitan 84). A longer version of the *hadîth* us that this will take place when al-Dajjal (the Antichrist) is in charge of Jerusalem, with 70,000 armed Jews standing behind him. Jesus will look al-Dajjal, 'and he will melt like in water,' and then

Jesus will slay him. God will then put the Jews to flight. 'Nothing will remain of what God created [illegible] which a Jew conceals himself without [illegible] making it speak, neither stone, nor tree, nor wall, [illegible] crawling creature – except the thornbush, for [illegible] is one of their [illegible] and will not speak . . .' (Ibn Maja, Fitan 33).

28. Allusion to Qur'an 51:56, 'I created *jinn* [illegible] mankind only to worship Me,' which Ibn 'Abbas – [illegible] Ibn al-'Arabi tells [illegible] (*Futûhât* II 214.16) – interpreted to [illegible] 'to know Me'.
29. Here Ibn al-'Arabi is interpreting this verse to mean that knowledge [illegible] only from God and that [illegible] creature has the power to know Him by itself. Creatures only know Him when He gives them knowledge, [illegible] is stated in Qur'an 2:255: 'They encompass nothing of His knowledge save as He wills.' More commonly, Ibn al-'Arabi refers to this verse in reference to the special 'God-given' (*ladunnî*) knowledge which [illegible] bestowed upon Khadir. Cf. *Sufi Path* pp. 235–6. On the fact that no one knows God directly, only through himself, cf. [illegible] 341ff.
30. From another point of view, all things possess *nutq*, [illegible] Ibn al-'Arabi points out below and towards the end of Chapter 339.
31. This protest of the angels to Adam's creation forms the subject of an extended commentary toward the beginning of [illegible] first chapter of the *Fusûs*. [illegible] also *Sufi Path* pp. 68, 142.
32. Ibn al-'Arabi seems to contradict what he said earlier in the chapter concerning who is given prescription. But in the earlier [illegible] he said that 'nothing other than the two weighty ones is *like* [illegible] in the property of worship and prescription,' and elsewhere he makes clear that [illegible] angels are indeed given prescriptions, but they are not 'like us' in this since they receive only commandments, not prohibitions (*Futûhât* III 118.35).
33. This well-known invocatory formula is found in many *hadîths*.
34. On this *hadîth* and Ibn al-'Arabi's interpretation of it, cf. *Sufi Path* pp. 325–31.
35. The reference is to a *hadîth* found in Muslim (Janna 77) and other sources, the [illegible] of which is [illegible] follows: 'The Messenger of God abandoned those slain [illegible] [illegible] for three days. Then he [illegible] [illegible] them, stood over them, and [illegible] to them, saying: "O Abu Jahl ibn Hisham, O Umayya ibn Khalaf, O 'Utba ibn Rabi'ah, O Shayba ibn Rabi'ah, have you not found what your Lord promised you [illegible] [illegible] true? For verily, I have what my Lord promised me to be true!" 'Umar heard the words of the Prophet and said, "O Messenger of God! How can they hear and how can they answer? For they are corpses." He replied, "By Him whose hand holds my soul, you do not hear what I [illegible] saying better than they, but they [illegible] unable [illegible] answer." Then he told them to drag them away and throw them into the well of Badr.'
36. On 'miraculous breaking of habits', cf. *Sufi Path* index, s.v. habit. The expression 'Moses' cow' normally refers to the [illegible] mentioned in Qur'an 2:67–71, after which the chapter takes its name, but that [illegible] has nothing especially miraculous about it. Perhaps Ibn al-'Arabi has the golden 'calf' in mind, since he mentions, e.g. [illegible] the beginning of the chapter on Jesus in the *Fusûs*, [illegible] it manifested the signs of life in [illegible] somewhat miraculous way [illegible] of the influence of the spirit. See also *Futûhât* II 143.5, 378.18.
37. Up until this point I have been translating *wujûd* as 'existence', but in this case [illegible] ambiguity of the term *wujûd*, which refers basically to the underlying substance of the Real, or 'Being', comes to [illegible] fore. In *Sufi Path*, I frequently

resorted to the expression Being/existence in such [redacted] Here I will leave the term untranslated. On *wujûd* see *Sufi Path*, especially Chapter 5; also Chittick, 'Ibn al-'Arabi's Doctrine of the Oneness of Being', *Sufi* [redacted] (1989–90), pp. 6–14.

38. Clearly with [redacted] few changes the analogy could be extended to the television screen [redacted] the cinema. Probably the [redacted] famous [redacted] of this analogy [redacted] [redacted] literature is found in Ibn al-Farid's *Nazm al-sulûk*. Cf. R.A. Nicholson, *Studies in Islamic Mysticism*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1921, pp. 189–91, 260–2; A.J. Arberry, *The Poem of the Way* Emery Walker, London, 1952, lines 2130–237.
39. [redacted] III 150–54.
40. Cf. *Sufi* [redacted] p. [redacted]
41. On this term, cf. *Sufi Path* pp. xii–xiii, 222–3.
42. II 88.5 (quoted in *Sufi Path* p. 240).
43. Cf. *Sufi Path* p. 405, [redacted] 4.
44. On [redacted] station of the Muhammadans, cf. *Sufi Path*, chapter 20.
45. This is [redacted] sound [redacted] (cf. *Sufi Path* p. 399, note 14).
46. This [redacted] is not found in the usual sources, but it is 'sound' according to Ibn al-'Arabi (cf. *Sufi Path* p. 412, note 5).
47. On the divine [redacted] as 'supports' (*mustanad*), cf. *Sufi Path* pp. 37–8.
48. Glorification is connected [redacted] God's incomparability (*tanzîh*), and affirmation (*ithbât*) to His similarity (*tashbîh*). These [redacted] the two basic modes in which God is known. Cf. *Sufi Path* p. 71.
49. Reference to the *hadîth*, 'God [redacted] ninety-nine names, one hundred [redacted] one. He who [redacted] them will [redacted] the Garden,' recorded in Bukhari [redacted] other [redacted] sources.
50. *Futûhât* [redacted] 146–24.
51. For [redacted] discussion of [redacted] of the implications of this poem, cf. Chapter [redacted] [redacted] station of abandoning freedom (translated into English in *Les Illuminations* 260–64).
52. Ibn al-'Arabi finds allusion to this 'face in all things' in Qur'an 28:88, which may [redacted] [redacted] 'Everything is annihilated except His face,' or 'Everything is annihilated except its face.' In the first case, [redacted] can [redacted] the [redacted] [redacted] referring to the face of God in the thing, and in the second to the face of the thing in God, [redacted] of [redacted] these two faces are the same face, identical with the thing's reality or immutable entity. Ibn al-'Arabi often refers to face in this [redacted] as the 'specific face' (*al-wajh al-khâss*) possessed by each and every existent thing, i.e. the face of God turned specifically toward that thing to the exclusion of every other thing, thereby bestowing upon it its own uniqueness. On the interpretation of the above Quranic verse in this sense, cf. *Sufi Path* pp. 102, 118; *Les Illuminations* p. 95; Chittick and P.L. Wilson (trans.), *Fakhruddin 'Iraqi: Divine Flashes*, Paulist Press, New York, 1981, pp. 126, 165.
53. In another [redacted] Ibn al-'Arabi explains why the Prophet [redacted] this [redacted] follows: [redacted] of the Shari'a came down because of [redacted] asking of the Community. Had they not asked, it would not have been [redacted] down' (*Futûhât* II 562:16; cf. II 685:12). [redacted] Bukhari (I'tisâm 2), the text of [redacted] [redacted] reads [redacted] follows: 'Let alone what I have [redacted] [redacted] for you. Those who [redacted] before you were destroyed only because of their asking from and their divergence [redacted] their prophets. If I have

forbidden something to you, avoid it, and if I have [illegible] you [illegible] do something, [illegible] of it what you can.'

54. Sensory 'felicity' (*sa'âda*) [illegible] that which is found in paradise, the Garden. Felicity [illegible] the result of 'guidance', which is a divine attribute manifested by the prophets, just as wretchedness (*shiqâ*) is the result of misguidance, [illegible] divine attribute manifested by Satan. Both the prophets and Satan follow the divine engendering command (*al-amr al-takwînî*), but only the prophets guide according [illegible] prescriptive command (*al-amr al-taklîfî*), which leads to felicity (cf. *Sufi Path* pp. 291–4). Both felicity [illegible] wretchedness [illegible] 'sensory' because they are perceived by the five senses, as are all imaginal phenomena. But this [illegible] preclude the existence of suprasensory felicity, and Ibn al-'Arabi along with others interprets the 'two gardens' mentioned in Qur'an 55:46 to refer [illegible] the simultaneous experience of sensory and suprasensory delights, much [illegible] can experience physical as well [illegible] mental pleasure [illegible] the same time in this world.
55. On the Level of the Divinity [illegible] contrasted with the Divine Essence, cf. *Sufi Path* pp. 49–50.
56. Reference to Qur'an 2:30, 'And when thy Lord said to the angels, "I am setting in [illegible] earth [illegible] vicegerent".'
57. [illegible] al-'Arabi sometimes cites this saying as [illegible] *hadîth*.
58. On the difference between human 'completion' [illegible] 'perfection', cf. *Sufi Path* pp. 296–7.
59. Cf. II 469, translated in *Sufi Path* p. 46.
60. Ibn al-'Arabi usually quotes this [illegible] in connection with angels, [illegible] in the Quranic [illegible]
61. The [illegible] is found with slight differences in Ibn Maja, Zuhd 19; Tirmidhi, Zuhd 9. The whole [illegible] reads [illegible] follows: 'I [illegible] what you do not see, [illegible] I hear what you do not hear. Heaven moans, and it has [illegible] right to [illegible] Within [illegible] is [illegible] the place of four fingers without an angel placing its forehead in prostration to God. By God, if you knew what I knew, you would laugh little and weep much. You would not take enjoyment with women in bed. You would [illegible] [illegible] in [illegible] roads praying fervently [illegible] God. By God, you would wish that you were [illegible] felled tree.'
62. This sentence is found in a slightly different form in a long *hadîth* commenting on Qur'an 57:4. The relevant [illegible] reads, 'If you let a man with a rope down [illegible] [illegible] lowest earth, he would fall upon God' (Tirmidhi, *Tafsîr sûrah* 57).
63. [illegible] [illegible] refers to perfect [illegible] in general, [illegible] specifically to one of viziers of the Pole.
64. Perfect man is the 'all-comprehensive engendered thing' (*al-kawn al-jâmi'*), [illegible] mentioned [illegible] the beginning of Chapter 1 of [illegible] *Fusûs*. Thereby [illegible] is the locus in which the 'all-comprehensive name' (*al-ism al-jâmi'*), i.e. Allah, manifests all its properties.
65. Allusion to Qur'an 31:20, quoted in the introduction to this chapter. Ibn al-'Arabi [illegible] already discussed the nature of the 'subjection' mentioned in [illegible] verse, and now he turns [illegible] the other qualities.
66. Since these [illegible] the three possible modes of knowledge. Cf. *Sufi Path* p. 188.
67. This [illegible] [illegible] found in Bukhari (*Tafsîr sûrah* 48, 2) and several more of the [illegible] [illegible] sources. Cf. Chittick, 'Ibn 'Arabi's [illegible] Summary of the *Fusûs*', *Journal of the Muhyiddin* [illegible] *'Arabi Society* 1 (1982), pp. 74–5.

68. Ibn al-'Arabi is [illegible] speaking in [illegible] figurative [illegible] here. Elsewhere [illegible] writes, 'The servant speaks no word from which [illegible] angel. If [illegible] word is good, it is an angel of mercy, and if it is evil, it is an angel of vengeance' (II 639:25). Ibn al-'Arabi calls these the 'angels created from the works (or the breaths) of human beings.' 'God creates from works angelic, spiritual, corporeous, *barzakh* forms' (II 377.33). We will content ourselves here with quoting one more of many possible passages:

> When the [illegible] reaches this waystation of knowledge, 'He will [illegible] the works of the wretched embodied [illegible] works of the felicitous embodied in the [illegible] way, as subsistent forms aware of the existence of their creator. God places in the souls of these forms a search for the secondary [illegible] which brought them into existence, i.e. [illegible] workers, and they [illegible] serious in their search. As for the works of the felicitous, these works see [illegible] their right hands a path which they follow. It takes them to the witnessing of their possessors, i.e. the felicitous. One of them will choose out the other. They inquire about each other, and then the workers will take them [illegible] [illegible] of triumph and deliverance which carry them to the resting place of mercy. As for the works of the wretched, to them appear many branching and intersecting paths, and they do [illegible] know which path they should follow to reach their possessors. They are bewildered and find [illegible] guidance, and this derives from God's mercy toward the wretched. Since the works are bewildered, they return to God in worship and remembrance (*dhikr*). (III 141:14)

The passage goes on to tell us that some of the works eventually reach their owners and help them attain to felicity. For other passages on this kind of angel, cf. II 109:14, 626:7, 632:9, 635:7, 656:27; III 126:12, 361:10. [illegible] also C. Addas, *Ibn 'Arabi*, Gallimard, Paris, [illegible] p. 127.

69. Ibn al-'Arabi frequently mentions one or more of these three kinds of opening (cf. *Sufi Path* p. 224).

70. The reference is to Qur'an 33:50, which deals with the Prophet's wives beyond [illegible] four allowed to the believers, and the fact that [illegible] believing [illegible] can 'give' herself to the Prophet: 'O Prophet, We have made lawful for thee thy wives . . .; and any woman believer, if she give herself to the Prophet [illegible] if the Prophet desire to take her in marriage – for thee exclusively, apart from the believers. We know what We have imposed upon them teaching their wives and what their right hands own. Hence there may be [illegible] fault in thee.'

71. The term 'fully created' (*mukhallaq*) is mentioned in Qur'an 22:5 in [illegible] describing the formation of the child in the womb: 'Surely We created you of dust . . . then [illegible] lump of flesh, fully created and not fully created, that We may [illegible] clear to you.' The commentators suggest that the lump of flesh [illegible] is [illegible] fully created does not receive a spirit, [illegible] is aborted, or is born with deformities. Ibn al-'Arabi usually applies the [illegible] [illegible] the works that [illegible] born [illegible] [illegible] result of human activity, works which take on an independent existence of their own in the World of Imagination, as [illegible] [illegible] above. Fully created works lead to felicity, while works which [illegible] not fully created may contribute to wretchedness. He writes:

> The divine spirit gains mastery over this corporeal mount. When it [illegible] to

it, the mount becomes pregnant, and works are born, either righteous (*sâlih*), i.e. the fully created, or corrupt (*fâsid*), i.e. the not fully created. These works then become manifest in the form of mounts [i.e. in imaginal forms resembling corporeal mounts]. If they are righteous, they ascend to the high heaven (*'illiyîn*). God says, "To Him good words ascend" (35:10), i.e. the wholesome spirits, for they are the purified words of God . . . and He says, "The righteous work – He lifts it up" (35:10). In the reverse way, if the work is corrupt, it falls to the lowest of the low' (III 33:11). Cf. II 489:16.

72. As is well known, the 'abrogation' of the previous religions by the Qur'an is one of the basic arguments of exoteric Muslims who use to prove the superiority of Islam.
73. Here allusion is made to two *hadîths*. The first, 'Were Moses alive, he would find it impossible not to follow me,' is rarely found in the standard sources; while the second, in which the Prophet says he was given the 'all-comprehensive words', is considered sound. Cf. *Sufi Path* pp. 239ff.
74. Cf. *Sufi Path* p. 239.
75. In keeping with his belief in general, Ibn al-'Arabi frequently rejects the suggestion, put forth by some of the Muslim philosophers, that men become a prophet through one's own works. Cf. *Sufi Path* pp. 219, 261.
76. Ibn al-'Arabi refers to a sound *hadîth*, which he often quotes in the context of the legitimacy of *ijtihâd* (cf. *Sufi Path* p. 401, note 8). For some of Ibn al-'Arabi's views on *ijtihâd*, cf. *Les Illuminations* pp. 210–11 note passim.
77. Ibn al-'Arabi usually refers to these laws established by wise men but not directly revealed by God as *nomos* (*nâmûs*). The basic difference between the two kinds of laws is that the former takes care of the best interests (*masâlih*) of people in this world, whereas the shari'a takes into account the best interests of people in both this world and the next. 'The shari'as are only to give knowledge of the situation of the present world. If they were limited to the best interests of this world, the wise law-establishing *nomoi* which God inspired in those of His servants whom He desired would have been sufficient' (II 248:4). Cf. II 117.30; also *Futûhât* Chapter 66, translated by Chittick, 'From the *Meccan Openings*: The Myth of the Origin of Religion and the Law,' *The World and I* 3/1 (January 1988), pp. 655–65.
78. On the high station of the Verifier (*muhaqqiq*) in Ibn al-'Arabi's views, cf. *Sufi Path*, index. Note that *muhaqqiq* derives from the same root as *haqîqa* and hence the Verifier is he who has established the Reality within himself.
79. Ibn al-'Arabi probably has in mind Chapter 263, 'On the true knowledge of the Reality,' much of which is translated in *Sufi Path* (see index of sources).
80. Lists of sciences such as the following were provided in the case of some of the chapters of the *Futûhât*. I retain this list in order to provide the full flavour of the chapter, but I make no attempt to clarify the references to discussions, since some are too allusive to grasp while those which can be deciphered would require several more pages of notes for full clarification. For the significance of these lists and the reason why this chapter corresponds to *Sûrah* 45 of the Qur'an, see M. Chodkiewicz, *Un Océan sans Rivage*, Seuil, Paris, 1992 pp. 87ff.

Towards a Poetic Translation of the *Fusûs al-Hikam*

MICHAEL SELLS

TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE

Presented here is a new translation of the first chapter of the *Fusûs al-Hikam*,[1] that attempts to bring across the poetic aspects of the text, and to keep the form and content as unified as possible. What immediately confronts the translator attempting such a task is the wide variety of styles employed within the chapter, and the manner in which Ibn 'Arabi manages nevertheless to create a sense of unity. I have divided the chapter into several sections and have provided titles for them. Some are highly rhythmical, with language tending toward the symbolic and the mythic. Others are more discursive, with extensive use of philosophical terminology and more argumentative rhetoric. The translation style changes accordingly. For some passages, I have used free verse form, and kept punctuation and capitalization to a minimum. For others I have used block paragraphs and standard punctuation. The translation has been guided by the 'thought rhythm'. It aims to be poetic in reflecting as much as possible the poetic qualities of the original, not by creating new poetic effects.

Arabic does not employ capital letters and Arabic writers do not use capitals to mark the divinity of a referent. Instead, an expression like *ta'âlâ* (may he be exalted) or *subhâna* (may he be praised) may be used. I have refrained from using capitals for this purpose in the translation. For *subhâna* and *ta'âlâ*, I have employed the sign ( ) to avoid cluttering the intricate thought rhythms of Ibn 'Arabi with frequent repetitions of non-rhythmical English expressions.[2]

The expression 'the real' is used to translate *al-haqq*. This word can take on a personal charge as deity or creator, or it can take on a transpersonal charge as that which is beyond any single entification. To keep from reifying the word in any one of these aspects, I have varied the pronoun used with it between 'he' and 'it'. I have used 'human' rather than 'man' for *insân*. Like the Greek *anthrôpos*, the Arabic *insân* is not gender specific. Though we might use the word 'man' with the intention of being gender inclusive, the word's semantic field is replete with elements (manhood, manliness, manly, be a man, he-man, manhandle) that can exercise a semantic influence, especially on the poetic level

where subliminal effects, connotations, nuances, the flavour of a word, are most telling.[3]

The term *'ayn* poses particular difficulties. Ibn 'Arabi uses it in two technical senses, both for the intelligible idea of something and for its concrete manifestation. Elsewhere he makes subtle plays upon a more idiomatic meaning ('the very essence of') while still keeping in mind the technical sense, as in the references to Adam as the *'ayn* of the polishing of the mirror, the angels' complaint as the *'ayn* of contention, the two hands of the divine as the *'ayn* of unification of two forms. English is more restricted than Arabic in its ontological vocabulary, and what words do exist tend to be long and latinate. Among these possibilities, unappealing from the poetic point of view, I have chosen 'determination' for *'ayn* in the sense of concrete manifestation, and have used it consistently. The multivalent use of the term is of central importance to the chapter and contains within it an implicit theory of symbolic interpretation.[4]

A translator is capable of writing *ad infinitum* about the practice and theory of translation. Elsewhere I have written at more length on the problems involved in translating the *Fusûs* and the relationship between translation and interpretation within the Adam chapter.[5] It seems appropriate then to turn immediately to the translation, after a citation of the following key passages from the Qur'an and the *hadîth* that are evoked in the chapter through allusion.

1. When I [Allah] love my servant . . . I become the hearing with which he hears, the seeing with which he sees, the hand with which he grasps, the feet with which he walks, the tongue with which he speaks. (*hadîth qudsî*)[6]

2. When your lord said to the angels:
I am going to place a regent [*khalîfa*] on the earth,
they said: Will you place one there
who will corrupt it and spill blood,
while we recite your praises and exalt you?
He said: I know what you do not know.
Then he taught Adam all the names
and showed everything to the angels, saying:
tell me their names, if you are sincere.
They said: praise be to you,
we know only what you have taught us,
you are the all-knowing, the all-wise.
He said: O Adam, tell them their names,
and when he had told them the names,
he said: did I not tell you that I know
what is hidden in the heavens and earth,
and know what you disclose and know what you hide?
Then we told the angels

[redacted] bow before Adam
[redacted] they did, except for Iblis,
who [redacted] scornful and acted proud,
and [redacted] a disbeliever. (Qur'an 2:30–34)

3. Remember when your lord said to the angels,
I am going to [redacted] person [*bashar*] from clay.
When I have shaped it
and breathed into it of my spirit,
fall bowing before it.
All the angels fell bowing together
Except Iblis who acted proud
and become a disbeliever.
He said: O [redacted]
what has prevented you from bowing
before what I created with my two hands?
Are you too proud or [redacted] you too lofty? (Qur'an 38:71–75)

4. When your lord said to the angels
I [redacted] going to create a person from hard-dried clay.
When I have shaped him
and have blown into him of my spirit
fall bowing before him.
All the angels [redacted] bowing together
Except Iblis who disdained [redacted] bow. (Qur'an 15:28–31)

5. Who created everything [redacted] created well,
and began the human being [*insân*] from clay,
And made his progeny from the extract of base
fluid,
Then shaped him
and breathed into him of his spirit,
and made for you hearing and vision and heart,
though your gratitude [redacted] little. (Qur'an 32:7–9)[7]

CHAPTER 1:
THE WISDOM OF DIVINITY IN THE WORD OF ADAM

Insân, Khalîfa, [redacted] Polished Mirror

When the real ( ) willed
from the standpoint of its [redacted] beautiful [redacted]
which are countless
to [redacted] their determinations

or you could [redacted]
when it willed to [redacted] its own determination

in [redacted] encompassing entity,
qualified with existence,
that would contain its order entire

to reveal to it(self) through it(self)[9]
its mystery

for the self-vision of a being through itself
is not like its self-vision through something outside
which [redacted] [redacted] a mirror

its self appearing to it
in a form
in a plane of reflection

a form which could not occur
without the existence of such a plane
[redacted] the self-manifestation in it

[redacted] when the real ( ) had brought into being
the world entire
a shaped form
without spirit

it [redacted] like an unpolished mirror

for divine providence never shapes a form
unless it receives divine spirit
which is [redacted]
the 'breathing into'

which [redacted] the activation
of the potential of that shaped image
to receive the overflowing
the eternal manifestation
[redacted] always was and always will [redacted]

outside of which there is only the vessel

which itself exists
from its most holy overflowing

for the entire order is from him
beginning and end
'and to him returns the order entire'
as from him it began –

what [redacted] required
[redacted] the polishing of the mirror
[redacted] is [redacted] world

and Adam was the determination
of the polishing
of that mirror

and the spirit of [redacted] form

the angels were certain powers of that form
which the folk call the *great human*

the angels were to [redacted]
[redacted] the spiritual and perceptual powers [redacted] the human [redacted]

but each power is veiled in itself
and sees nothing that is better than it

for they (the angels) claim kinship
to every high station and exalted rank before Allah
to divine comprehensiveness

whether it pertain [redacted]
the divine aspect

or the aspect of
the reality of realities

or, in the nature containing [redacted] these attributes,
to what is required by
universal nature

which encompasses the vessels of the world
all of them, high and low

and this no mind knows by rational speculation

but only by that [redacted] of apprehension
that originated in divine unveiling

which reveals the origin of the forms
that constitute the world

[redacted] receive [redacted] spirits

that one was named *insân* (human being, pupil of the eye)
and *khalîfa* (regent)

he is [redacted] *insân* because of the universality of his nature
encompassing all realities

he is to the real
as the *insân* of the eye is to the eye
the medium of vision and perception

so he is called *insân*
because through him the real views its creation
and extends them compassion

he is *insân*, originated and eternal

he [redacted] the living being, without beginning, without end

[redacted] is the word, discriminating and integrating

[redacted] is [redacted] world
[redacted] the ringstone of the ring is to the ring

the plane of inscription
the sign by which the king seals his coffer

he is called *khalîfa* then
since [redacted] transcendent guards through him his creation

as long as the seal guards the treasure chest
as long as it bears the seal of the king
no one dares open it without his permission

so [redacted] made him his *khalîfa*
charged with the safeguarding of his property
and the world is preserved
[redacted] long [redacted] the complete human being remains in it

don't you see that if he were no more
[redacted] broken off from [redacted] chest that is the world
the contents, which the real placed there, would spill [redacted]
the parts would interfuse
[redacted] the entire order would vanish into the afterworld

where he would be the eternal seal on the treasure chest
that is the afterworld.

[redacted] Angels' Error

The names in the divine form were all made manifest in this human nature, [redacted] acquired the station of inclusiveness and universality in this existence. [redacted] was the source of Allah's case against the angels. Remember. Allah warns you through another. Consider the [redacted] of the blame.

The angels [redacted] understand the [redacted] of that regent's nature. They [redacted] understand the intrinsic worship required by the [redacted] of [redacted] real. [redacted] only knows of the real what the intrinsic self reveals. The angels [redacted] the universality of Adam. They did not understand the divine [redacted] with which he was endowed, through which he praised the real and exalted it beyond praise.[9] They did not know that Allah has names at which their knowledge had not arrived, through which they had not praised the real, and beyond which they had not exalted it in the [redacted] of Adam.

Governed by this condition and overcome,
they [redacted] of [redacted] [redacted] of Adam:

'Will you place there one who will corrupt it?'

What would that be but contention?
which is no [redacted] than [redacted] determination of what they themselves were engaged in.

If their nature hadn't suggested it, they would not have said about the truth of [redacted] what they said, unknowing.

[redacted] they known themselves, they would have been secure.
They would [redacted] have persisted in their disparagement,
to [redacted] point of praising their praise [redacted] exalting their exaltation
though Adam [redacted] divine names they lacked
through which they could neither praise nor exalt their lord.

The real has described to us what happened that we might understand it and become refined with Allah, the transcendent,
[redacted] not make claims about what we deserve and comprehend through delimitation,
– [redacted] say nothing of making absolute and general claims
about something we do [redacted] have in our present state,
of which we have no knowledge.

May we learn well.
This is the divine instruction through which Allah refined his servants, his wisest, [redacted] faithful regents.

Universal [redacted] Determinate

Now, returning to the Wisdom [in the word of Adam] [redacted] say:

> **Know [redacted] universals, though lacking in determinate existence, [redacted] without doubt intelligible [redacted] knowable in the mind. They are interior [redacted] determinate existence, affecting and governing everything that has determinate existence, which is, in fact, the very determination of [redacted] universals, not other [redacted] they.[10] They do not [redacted] to be intelligible when they [redacted] into their determinations. They [redacted] apparent (*zâhir*) in their determinate existences, just as they are hidden (*bâtin*) in their intelligibility.**

Every determinate existent depends upon these universals which [redacted] never be [redacted] from [redacted] whose existence within determination [redacted] never [redacted] tradict their being intelligible. Whether temporal or non-temporal, the relation of [redacted] determinate existent to the intelligible universal remains the same. However, the universal is itself governed in accordance with [redacted] realities of the determinate existent.

Take [redacted] relation of knowledge to the knower, and life to [redacted] who is alive. Life is an intelligible reality, and knowledge is [redacted] intelligible reality distinguished from life, just as life is distinguished in turn from knowledge. We say of the real ( ) that it has knowledge and life, and that therefore it is the living, the knower. We say of the angel that it has life and knowledge, and that therefore it is the living, the knower. We [redacted] of the human being that it has life [redacted] knowledge and [redacted] therefore it is the living, the knower. The reality of knowledge is one. The reality of [redacted] is one. And their relation to the knower and the living is [redacted] relation. [redacted] we say of the real's knowledge that it is unoriginated while [redacted] of the knowledge of the human that it is originated.

Note how this connection governs the intelligible reality, [redacted] consider the interrelation between intelligibles and determinations. Just as knowledge governs the one who knows so [redacted] he is called [redacted] knower, so [redacted] qualified by knowledge [redacted] it [redacted] originated with respect to the originated knower and unoriginated with respect [redacted] the eternal. Each side governs and [redacted] governed in turn.

We know that although these universals are intelligible, they [redacted] nonexistent determinately, existing only through their governance [of determinate existences], just as they are governed in turn through their relation to the determinate existent. They accept determination through determinate existents, but they do not accept division into parts. [redacted] would be impossible for them. They are intrinsic within everything they qualify. For example, humanity is within every [redacted] of that particular species, but [redacted] not divided or multiplied with [redacted] multiplication of individuals, and [redacted] ceases to be intelligible.

[redacted] connection between what has determinate existence and what does not has been established, [redacted] the relationship [redacted] 'non-existent'. The connection of existents

among themselves is more easily intellected since among them there is at least a co- factor, i.e. determinate itself. In the other case, [illegible] no factor. A connection can exist without a common factor, but one with a [illegible]n factor is stronger and more real.

The contingency of what is originated upon an originator to actualize it in its self-potentiality has been conclusively established.[11] Its existence is from another to [illegible] it is connected through a connection of contingency. That upon which it [illegible] be necessarily existent, intrinsically, independent [illegible] existence-in-itself, not contingent. It gives intrinsic existence [illegible] the originated being which thereby [illegible] into relation with it.

Insofar as the originated being requires it intrinsically, it is [illegible] through it. Insofar as [illegible] dependence upon [illegible] from which it appeared is intrinsic, it must [illegible] – in its relationship to it – in its image in every [illegible] and quality except intrinsic necessity. For [illegible] apply to [illegible] originated nature, which though [illegible] be [illegible] necessarily existent, [illegible] through another, not in itself.

Beyond Subject–Object Knowledge

[illegible] since the order appears, [illegible] we said, *in* [illegible] *image*,
the transcendent turns us to the originated for knowledge of him.

He reminded us that he showed us there his signs
to serve as guidance for us.

[illegible] describe him by any quality
unless [illegible] are that quality
with the exception of intrinsic necessity.

When we know him in ourselves and through ourselves
[illegible] attribute to him everything [illegible] attribute [illegible] ourselves.

Thus divine sayings have come down to us
through [illegible] tongues of their interpreters.

He described himself to us, through us.

When we witness him, we witness ourselves.
When we witness ourselves, we witness him.

We are many, in individuals and species. Though we are of one, common reality, we do not doubt that there is a distinction through which individuals are differen-[illegible] one from the other, without which there would [illegible] be many-in-one.

Similarly, if we describe ourselves in all respects as he described himself, there still

must be a distinction: our existential contingency [redacted] suspension [redacted] him due to our mere possibility and his independence from the kind of contingency that characterizes us.

He is properly considered to [redacted] eternal [redacted] without origin, [redacted] who has [redacted] beginning in the [redacted] of [redacted] opening of existence out of nothingness. Firstness is not applicable [redacted] him though he is 'the first'. It is for this reason that he is called the 'last.' Were [redacted] first in the [redacted] of [redacted] existence, he would [redacted] [redacted] the last, an attribute inapplicable to what is delimited. [redacted] being [redacted] no last. Possibilities are endless – there is no last to them. He is last only through the universal order's [redacted] to him after its relation to [redacted]

He is the last in being first
and the first in being last.

The Two [redacted] of the [redacted]
The Hidden and the Manifest, Intimacy and Majesty, the Real [redacted] World

know that the real described himself as apparent and hidden

[redacted] brought forth the world
as a world of the hidden and a world of witness

that we might apprehend the [redacted]
with [redacted] hidden nature
and the apparent world
through witness

and he described himself as benevolent and angry
[redacted] brought forth a world of fear [redacted] hope,
[redacted] for our fear, benevolence for [redacted] hope

he [redacted] himself as beautiful and powerful
and brought [redacted] forth to intimacy and awe

[redacted] all his attributes [redacted] [redacted] [redacted] these two poles

he [redacted] the two qualities
his [redacted]
stretching [redacted] from him
[redacted] the creation of [redacted] complete human being
the being [redacted] comprehends the [redacted] [redacted] elements of the world

the world is witness
the regent is hidden
dominion [redacted] veiled

the real ascribed to itself
veils of darkness, the natural bodies
and veils of light, transparent spirits

world is between thickness and transparency
veiled in itself

it [redacted] perceive the real as [redacted] real perceives itself

its veil cannot be lifted

it knows its contingency distinguishes it from the existence of the real
it has no share in its intrinsic necessity

it will never apprehend it

in this regard the real is unknowable through taste and witness

originated being [redacted] way there

Allah encompassed Adam in his two hands
[redacted] honour

so he asked Iblis
'what prevents you from prostrating yourself
before what I created with my two hands?'

this is the determination
of his bringing together of two forms
the form of the world
and the form of the real

[redacted] the [redacted] hands of the real

[redacted] Iblis, only a part of the world,
[redacted] attain [redacted] that universality

for [redacted] it is Adam who is regent

if [redacted] did [redacted] manifest the form of the [redacted] appointed him regent
[redacted] would not be regent

if he did not contain all that the subjects entrusted [redacted] him require
for their dependence [redacted] him [redacted] be complete
[redacted] would not be their regent

regency belongs to the complete human being alone

I Am His Hearing and His Sight

So he constructed his apparent form
from [redacted] realities of the world and its forms
And he constructed his hidden form
upon his own ( ) form

Saying in this regard:
'I [redacted] his hearing and his sight'

[redacted] say
'I [redacted] his eye [redacted] ear'
but distinguished between the two forms

Similarly, he is within every existent in the world
according to what the reality of that existent requires

[redacted] one has the comprehensiveness of the regent

His distinction is that comprehensiveness

If the real did [redacted] penetrate the existents with its form
the world would have no existence
And were it [redacted] for the universal intelligible realities
[redacted] determination would [redacted] in the phenomenal existents
In accordance with this truth
the world is contingent upon the real for existence

All is contingent, not all is independent
This is the real – we proclaim it – we don't just allude

Remember [redacted] who is independent, [redacted] contingent,
You'll know when we speak what we mean

All in all is interconnected, without separation
Take from [redacted] what I say

Adab [redacted]

You have learned the wisdom of [redacted] of Adam
his apparent form

And you have [redacted] the nature of Adam's spirit
his [redacted] form.

He is both the real and the creature.

You have learned the nature of his rank
the comprehensiveness by which he deserves to be regent,

For Adam was the single self
from which the [redacted] species was created.

This is why [redacted] ( ) said:

> **'O humankind, fear your lord**
> **who made you from [redacted] self, and made from that self a mate,**
> **and from them propagated innumerable men and women'**

The expression 'fear your lord' means:

Make what appears in you a cover for your lord
and make what is hidden in you, that is your lord,
a cover for yourself[12]
for the order is of blame and praise.

In this way you will be [redacted] refined, learned.

Then he (may be he praised and exalted above praise)
[redacted] him understanding of what he had given him in trust
and put it all in the grasp of his two hands.

In the grasp of one hand [redacted] the world.

In the grasp of the other, Adam and his descendants'
whose ranks he made clear.

[redacted] [Ibn 'Arabi] said, may Allah [redacted] pleased with him:

'When Allah, be he praised and beyond praise, had given [redacted] understanding in [redacted] secret being of what he had placed in this first, greatest, Imam, I put down in this book what [redacted] marked out for me, not all that I understood – for [redacted] no [redacted] is sufficient, nor even the world [redacted] it [redacted] exists.

'And what I [redacted] present in this book of what I witnessed, [redacted] it was marked out for me by [redacted] messenger of Allah (peace and blessings upon him) is the following:

> **The wisdom of divinity [redacted] the word of Adam, and that is this chapter**
> **The wisdom of expiration in the word of Seth**
> **The wisdom of praise in the word of [redacted]**
> **The wisdom of transcendence in the word of Enoch**
> **The wisdom of love-madness in the word of Abraham**
> **The wisdom of the real in the word of Isaac**

The wisdom of the sublime in the word of Ishmael
The wisdom of spirit in the word of Jacob
The wisdom of light in the word of Joseph
The wisdom of unity in the word of Hud
The wisdom of opening in the word of Salih
The wisdom of the heart in the word of Shu'ayb
The wisdom of sovereignty in the word of Lot
The wisdom of fate in the word of Ezra
The wisdom of prophecy in the word of Jesus
The wisdom of compassion in the word of Solomon
The wisdom of existence in the word of David
The wisdom of breath in the word of Jonah
The wisdom of the hidden in the word of Job
The wisdom of majesty in the word of John
The wisdom of dominion in the word of Zakariah
The wisdom of intimacy in the word of Elias
The wisdom of charity in the word of Luqman
The wisdom of leadership in the word of Aaron
The wisdom of eminence in the word of Moses
The wisdom of stability in the word of Khalid
The wisdom of individuality in the word of Muhammad

The setting of each wisdom is the word that is attributed to it. I have restricted myself in what I have recounted of the wisdoms in this book to what is supported by the mother of books. I have, therefore, represented what [illegible] described to me and I have stopped at the boundary drawn out for me. And if I wished more than that I would not be able to achieve it. For the presence forbids that. Allah is the guarantor of success. There is no lord but he.

NOTES

1. **The translation is [illegible] edition of A.A. Affifi: [illegible] 'Arabi, *Fusûs al-Hikam*, [illegible] with commentary by A.A. Affifi, [illegible] vols., [illegible] Ihyâ' [illegible] al-'Arabiyya, Cairo, 1946, 1:48–58. Section 1 from the above translation [illegible] appeared, in slightly different form, in M. Sells, 'Ibn 'Arabi's Polished Mirror: Perspective Shift and Meaning Event', *Studia Islamica* [illegible] (1988):pp. 121–49. [illegible] have [illegible] from [illegible] number of English translations of the *Fusûs*: [illegible] Titus Burckhardt, *La Sagesse des Prophètes*, A. Michel, Paris, 1955, [illegible] into English by Angela Culme-Seymour [illegible] *The Wisdom of the Prophets*, [illegible] Publications, Swyre Farm, 1975, and R.W.J. Austin's complete translation, *Bezels of Wisdom*, Paulist Press, New York [illegible] Translations [illegible] also be found interspersed through the critical study of T. Izutsu: *A Comparative Study of [illegible] Key Philosophical Concepts in Sufism and Taoism*, Tokyo, 1983; Berkeley, 1984. Finally, [illegible] have the Rauf/Bursevi version of the *Fusûs* with commentary: *Ismail [illegible] [illegible] translation of and commentary on Fusûs al-Hikam by Muhyiddin ibn 'Arabi*, rendered into English by [illegible] [illegible] with**

help of R. H. Tollemache, 4 vols, Muhyiddin Ibn 'Arabi Society, Oxford and Istanbul, 1986–91.

2. Ibn 'Arabi's of these expressions is distinctive in precise translation of would be something like the following: 'may praised through the name I am using but exalted beyond it.'
3. I have attempted to rewrite the language for the of gender equality by inserting 'she' for divine complete human being. The chapter of the *Fusûs* that on Muhammad, offers a profound exploration of question of gender the level of both theory and linguistic praxis. There and throughout his other writings, Ibn 'Arabi is to introduce feminine constructions by using like *dhât*, *nafs*, *asmâ'*, and then partially personifying the grammatically feminine pronoun they engender. It might be argued that there would be justified of 'she' in connection with the complete being in this chapter. The word *nash'a* (nature) is grammatically feminine. I have argued in another context, that much is lost when such grammatically feminine constructions are translated into a monotonically masculine and neuter English: M. Sells, 'Sound, Spirit, and Gender in Surat al-Qadr', *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 111.2 (1991) pp. 239–60. depends upon how much 'charge' is given to these pronouns in the itself. An implicit personification can be formed by using series of grammatically feminine pronouns in context where one is speaking of the divine beloved – drawing the pronoun into the erotic lover–beloved metaphor, through other means. Though in other Ibn 'Arabi does charge the grammatical feminine of for nature such as *tabi'a* in this particular case I do not find such charging of the pronoun that would justify the of feminine English pronouns. Though there is definitely something lost in giving up balanced grammatical gender, to attempt to keep it here might result in feeling of artificiality.
4. Ibn 'Arabi's of term is difficult and complex one of interpreters attempted systematic exposition of its meaning in the work of the Shaykh al-Akbar. See William Chittick, 'Sadr al-Din Qunawi on the Oneness of Being', *International Philosophical Quarterly* 21 (1981):pp. 171–84.
5. See M. Sells, 'Ibn 'Arabi's Garden among the Flames: a Reevaluation', *History of Religions* (May, 1984):pp. 287–315; 'Ibn 'Arabi's Polished Mirror: Perspective Shift and Meaning Event' (cited above, 1); 'Bewildered Tongue: The Semantics of Mystical Union in Islam', in M. and B. McGinn, eds., *Mystical Union and Monotheistic Faith*, MacMillan, New York, 1989, pp. 87–125, 163–75, 219–31, 238–9. The last two essays include extensive discussion of the issues mentioned in this preface, such avoiding the use of capitalization to indicate reference to the divine, and the theological connotations of locutions like *ta'âla* and *subhâna* in Ibn 'Arabi. I have used the following equivalents in the translation: the apparent (*zâhir*) apprehend (*adraka*); binding, delimitation (*taqyîd*); the 'breathing into' (*al-nafkh fihi*); contingency (*iftiqâr*); factor (*jâmi'*); dependence (*istinâd*); division into parts (*tafsîl wa tajazzi'*); the folk, i.e. Sufis (*al-qawm*); intrinsic (*bi dhâtihâ*); the hidden (*al-ghayb*), and where indicated, *al-bâtin*); intelligible (*ma'qûl*); interconnection, connection (*irtibât*; manifestation (*tajallî*); mind (*dhihn*, *'aql*); order (*amr*); originated (*hâdith*, *muhdath*); the overflowing (*al-fayd*); polishing

(*jalâ'*); possibility (*imkân*); refinement (*adab*); speculation (*nazar*); universals (*al-'umûr al-kulliyya*); unveiling (*kashf*).

6. From Bukhari, 81:38. Translations from the [redacted] and the Qur'an [redacted] own. For a discussion of this *hadîth*, see William Graham, *Divine Word and Prophetic Word in Early Islam*, The Hague, 1977, p. 173.
7. I am indebted to Ahmed Ali for the expression 'extract of base fluid' *Al-Qur'an: A Contemporary Translation* by Ahmed Ali, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1988, p. 352. I have found [redacted] other translation of this particular expression [redacted] is [redacted] clear [redacted] Austin (*Bezels of Wisdom*, p. 50) cites [redacted] the [redacted] of allusion in [redacted] chapter the Quranic [redacted] 21:91: *fa nafakhnâ fîhâ min rûhinâ* ('and we breathed into [redacted] some of [redacted] spirit'). This [redacted] (along with its parallel in 66:12) is [redacted] reference [redacted] the story of Maryam and the conception of Jesus, rather than [redacted] the creation of Adam. It [redacted] interesting to note the almost identical language used by the Qur'an in reference [redacted] the [redacted] events.
8. There is an ambiguity in the original Arabic here between the reflexive and non-reflexive which I have preserved in translation through the use of parentheses. I have suggested that this ambiguity is tied into the breakdown of reflexive [redacted] non-reflexive, self and other, [redacted] the point of mystical union. See the article cited above, 'Ibn 'Arabi's Polished Mirror', passim.
9. The antecedent of the subject of the verbs *sabbahat* (praised) and *qadasat* (exalted) is ambiguous here. I render the antecedent [redacted] the *jam'iyya* (universality) of the complete human being, the most proximate antecedent and the choice that avoids [redacted] sense of redundancy in the following sentence. This [redacted] the choice made by Burckhardt, while the Austin and Bursevi/Rauf versions interpret the antecedent [redacted] the angels.

[redacted] A difficult phrase to translate: *a'yân al-mawjûdat al-'ayniyya*. This expression brings into high relief the difficulty in Ibn 'Arabi's use of the [redacted] *'ayn* to refer to both the concrete existent and the universal idea.

11. The reference here [redacted] to be Ibn Sina, whose vocabulary [redacted] theory concerning the necessary existent is now evoked. For one example, see *The Metaphysics of Avicenna (ibn Sîna)*, translation [redacted] commentary by Parviz Morewedge, Columbia University Press, New York, 1973, pp. 47–71.
12. Ibn 'Arabi is engaging here in [redacted] etymological pun [redacted] the phrase *ittaqû rabbakum*, which is usually translated as 'fear your lord'. The verb is [redacted] [redacted] the Arabic radical *w/q/y* whose root meaning is to 'cover'. To fear the lord is, etymologically, to cover oneself against him.

PART II

Studies

The Determinism Implicit to Change

AVRAHAM ABADI

He who claims to know [redacted] God is [redacted] Creator
while [redacted] being perplexed, this is the evidence of his ignorance.
None but God may know God, so take note
in order that your facing will not be marred by heedlessness.
The inability to comprehend perception is in itself [redacted] gnosis,
and this is the conviction which prevails upon the intelligent.
For He is the Divinity whose praises cannot [redacted] enumerated,
[redacted] who is the Incomparable, [redacted] whom similitudes do not apply.[1]

Inasmuch as any theory of evolution is [redacted] description of the arising of [redacted] greater diversity from [redacted] [redacted] of primary conditions, ultimately its subject is the emergence of complexity from simplicity which constitutes the very movement of becoming. Since plurality does not fragment the Divine Unity (*al-ahadiyya*), the movement of becoming cannot imply [redacted] causal association between complexity and its origin, and therefore its emergence has [redacted] be described in either one of two modes: dissociation or dependence. Dissociation affirms the incomparability of the Unity by portraying complexity [redacted] being its own cause and effect, while dependence acknowledges this reality by testifying that the being of plurality is none but the Being of Singleness, whose sheer simplicity permeates its modalities without any fusion or modification, [redacted] that in this respect, becoming consists of the delineation of dependence. The becoming of a greater complexity designates therefore the [redacted] absolute dependence which characterizes the emergence of lesser complexity; [redacted] in other words, the movement which effects greater complexity is the same impulse which gives rise to complexity [redacted] such, and consequently any consideration of intermediate productions must appertain to the dissociative mode. In fact this distinction is the sole subject of the following study, since it originated as an inquiry into the meaning of [redacted] single [redacted] which appears in the *Fusûs al-Hikam*: 'The Divine Intention (*al-mashf'a*) signifies the singleness of dependence'.[2]

According to the dissociative mode, existence appears [redacted] [redacted] chain of interactions and productions, whose continuity is recognized as [redacted] unfoldment which actualizes [redacted] ever-increasing diversity; wherefore it is this unfoldment, and [redacted] the delineation of dependence, that gives rise to the evolutionary principle. Though the empirical study of evolution

tends to focus upon the causal relations that bring about diversification, all the theories which are based upon this approach still acknowledge that becoming is ■ perpetual movement which is inexplicable in itself. While ■ is conceivable that this ■■■■■■ could raise ■ few eyebrows among those who profess to be diehard materialists, or ■■■ produce ■■■ astonishment among those who are engaged in the study of ■ spiritual discipline, once belief is segregated from the principles which define those theories, the above conclusion is inescapable. Empiricism always seeks to extract ■■ intelligible regularity from observation in order to arrive ■ accurate predictions. However, even the most ardent Darwinist will not claim that the occurrence of ■ mutation ■■ be predicted; on the contrary, he will insist that it is a product of chance. Irrespective of the notion which identifies chance with probability, the Darwinian model accepts that the determinism implied by causal relations simply cannot predict the disruption of ■ particular equilibrium which accompanies the appearance of ■ new species. For the conditions which characterize ■ particular context cannot be distinguished from the causes that constitute its inherent balance, whereby the disruption ■■■ signify the arising of ■ ■■■ context whose characteristics can be associated with the previous context only in retrospect. In other words, this model implies that the occurrence of ■ disruption is not an actualization of latencies which ■■■ inherent to the nature of the preceding context, and therefore it attributes the becoming of the mutation to external events, ■■ unpredictable interjections. Further, the Darwinian model assumes without any reservations that the process of becoming – or existence itself – inclines by its very nature towards the bringing about of greater diversity, and in this ■■■■ it depicts being ■■ ■ single latency whose effects cannot be known except through their actuality. Yet this does not suggest that the particularity of the species is inherent to that single latency, because the Darwinian model insists that the former is ■ product of an interaction between an impulse and an existing context; thus it defines the cause of the disruption as sheer potential (*quwwa*), and ■■ ■■ an actualization of a pre-established potentiality. But then, ■■■■ these definitions ■■■ abstracted from the particular domain that they describe, they necessarily imply that existentialization is ■ ■■■■■■ movement of self-sustained diversification which seeks to actualize the possibilities inherent to relativity, wherefore they do affirm the dissociation of the Unity from ■■ that depends upon It.

This affirmation is not shared by the school of thought which regards plurality as the expression of a single reality, or as actualizations of latencies that ■■■ inherent to the nature of their origin. For this view entails that the reality of complexity coincides with the essential definition of singleness, whereby it refers intelligible plurality to the Incomparability of the Unity, and it can never affirm the absolute simplicity which

designates the quiddity of the Divine Essence. The description of the unity of the multiplicity (*ahadiyyat al-kuthra*) in terms of the permeation of complexity by the being of simplicity, does not imply any interchange between appearance [illegible] that upon which it depends, because such [illegible] interchange would compromise both the dissociation of the Unity and the absolute dependence of all that exists [illegible] other than It. This point is emphasized by the Shaykh, where he explains the limitations of the knowledge which is acquired by [illegible] of the universal relations:

> Thus in spite of these acquisitions [illegible] limitations [which refer [illegible] the universals], the [illegible] [illegible] ceases [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] and the Lord [illegible] [illegible] to [illegible] Lord, and it is this [dissociation] that [illegible] the increase [illegible] decrease which appertain to [illegible] knowledge which is derived from revelation in the context of exteriority [illegible] interiority. But that which requires this [dissociation], is [illegible] [illegible] of complexity. For this reason all that God [illegible] created or brought into existence is complex by its essential definition (*'aynuhu*), so [illegible] the exteriority refers to the [illegible] and the interiority to the other. That which we learn from the simple principles (*al-basâ'it*) are only intelligible relations (*umûr ma'qûlât*) that do not exist [illegible] themselves, since any existent which is other than God, must be complex. [And know that] this realization has been conferred upon us through [illegible] insight which is not subject to doubt.[3]

The polarization conveyed by exteriority and interiority denotes that complexity is nothing but an existential appearance whose subsistence is maintained by the being of simplicity [illegible] such. In this sense the exterior cannot be an expression of the interior, since this description insists upon the dissociation of all that is other than God, while the actualization of a latency depicts the exterior [illegible] [illegible] manifestation of the interior. The latter suggestion implies that plurality expresses aspects of [illegible] unity in the [illegible] manner that predicates describe their subject. However, subject–predicate relations may only denote interdependence, seeing that the definition of [illegible] predicate infers that the subject comprises an intelligible collectivity whose synthesis conveys its particularity, and therefore, due [illegible] this very principle, subject–predicate relations cannot affirm the independence of the Unity from all that depends upon Its being.

The association of two modes of being through a single relation may depict them either [illegible] co-existent realities or as [illegible] subject and [illegible] predicate. [illegible] then the arising of complexity from simplicity defies both association and aspectation, whereby it has to be described in terms of two concomitant considerations which affirm the dissociation of [illegible] multiplicity from the singleness of its origin and its absolute dependence upon the being that sustains it. Their concomitance, or rather their complete identification with the singleness of the situation which they describe, implies that the affirmation of either [illegible] of these considerations entails the concealment of its counterpart, for otherwise their definitions would have inferred [illegible] intelligible complexity of a synthetic subject and its

predicates, or an actual duality. This mutual exclusion, as the Shaykh points out, is required by the [redacted] of complexity, seeing that [redacted] dependence introduces the polarization of appearance [redacted] the being which permeates it; and moreover, he indicates that the recognition of this principle constitutes the distinction between the knowledge which is conferred through revelation, and the knowledge which is obtained by means of the universal relations. Further, in the fiftieth chapter of his *Futûhât*, he emphatically denies the validity of any description of unity which is [redacted] upon a single relation:

> Every predicate (*sifah*) by which the possible is qualified [redacted] once [redacted] which it qualifies [redacted] or [redacted] though the possible continues to be. The latter [redacted] appertains to abstract relations (*sifât al-ma'ânî*), while the former refers to existential qualities (*sifât an-nafs*), though both are only possible. However, if they [redacted] considered [redacted] an uninterrupted sequence [whose unfoldment governs] both material and subtle existence, this suggests that the Necessary Existent is qualified by that which is only possible in itself, when the Necessary [redacted] does not accept the definition of possibility in the [redacted] of that which [redacted] may [redacted] happen. Thus, [redacted] the qualification by that [which may or may not be possible] is recognized [redacted] being invalid – due to the principle implied by [redacted] mode of attribution – its only validity [must be ascribed to] the association which is established through speech. Moreover, once the association is recognized [redacted] being invalid in respect of [the mutual exclusion implied by] [redacted] particular [redacted] [redacted] principle, the attributes of the Real can never be united with the attributes of the servant through a single definition. Consequently, the definition of an uninterrupted sequence is invalid, and it has to be rejected both with regard to material and subtle existence.[4]

An uninterrupted sequence infers necessary unfoldment, since its continuity depicts [redacted] unbroken succession of latencies and actualizations which are inherent to the subject that they express, where each actualization is defined [redacted] a latency which requires further expression. But [redacted] latency cannot [redacted] affirmed [redacted] such except in relation to the particularity which actualizes its potential, while [redacted] the other hand, [redacted] particularity cannot be considered as an expression of [redacted] universal principle unless the latter incorporates its latency. In this light, this mode of association demonstrates the same interdependence that characterizes subject–predicate relations, or the same interdependence to which the Shaykh refers in saying that the predicate 'ceases to be once that which it qualifies ceases'. Hence if this interdependence is identified with the process of becoming, it necessarily 'suggests that the Necessary Existent is qualified by that which is only possible in itself', or that the Unity is qualified by the latencies of plurality. According [redacted] this notion, the possible does not denote the absolute dependence which constitutes the essential definition of all that is other than God, because it equates the possible with probability, and thereby it asserts that the possible is a necessary attribute

whose intelligibility coincides with the essential definition of the Being. The independence of [redacted] reality from the expressions which it effects requires that they should [redacted] described as unnecessary manifestations whose existence actualizes that which is [redacted] inherent to their origin. The possible, then, is not that which may or may [redacted] be actualized; rather, it is an expression which is [redacted] necessary for the reality which brings [redacted] about, wherefore the only relation which it infers with regard [redacted] the Necessary is that of complete dependence, or non-necessity. As they are not inherent to their origin, the particular [redacted] of these expressions [redacted] be deduced from the essential definition of the reality which effects their existence, and therefore they cannot be described in [redacted] of [redacted] single relation whose associativity would have portrayed them either as a separate reality or as predicates of a synthetic subject, [redacted] though their absolute dependence cannot be inferred from the independence of the Real. For this reason, their dissociation has to be described in [redacted] of two concomitant considerations, because [redacted] the one hand, their dependence entails that their being is the being of the Real, while on the other, the non-existence of their latency implies that their existence appears [redacted] [redacted] autonomous reality – that is, [redacted] reality whose existence expresses its own possibility. [redacted] other words, the former consideration delineates the principle of interiority (*al-bâtin*), whereas the latter delineates the principle of exteriority [redacted] appearance (*az-zâhir*). Thus, non-necessity always signifies the dissociation, or otherness, of the autonomy which is existentialized by the being of the Necessary, whereby it manifests as a reality whose being is governed by its [redacted] particular necessities, [redacted] though its complete dependence entails that it subsists by virtue of [redacted] perpetual effusion of being.

Within the scope of human experience non-necessity is equated with choice, because the freedom that it encapsulates is comprised of the ability to implement one possibility in preference to another, where neither [redacted] to be necessary in itself. Yet this type of selection can-[redacted] appertain [redacted] the Divine Intention whose establishment initiates becoming, since selection requires that the possibility should precede the choice which actualizes it, while the existentialization of non-necessity signifies that its manifestation coincides with the arising of its possibility. Once the Divine Intention is identified with selection, existence has to be regarded [redacted] [redacted] direct expression of [redacted] divine preference, in the sense that it chooses to actualize [redacted] particular probability rather than another. This notion [redacted] be invalid, since it associates Necessity and possibility through a single relation, which [redacted] identifies with will, and consequently it refers the determination of the modality of the possible to the Real, in a manner that negates the autonomy which characterizes the manifestation of the former. As for the Shaykh, his understanding of this matter is completely unequivocal:

> 'There is none of us who has not his appointed place';[5] namely, that by which you are in your permanent latency (*thubût*), and by which you appear in your existence – if you consider that you do exist. But if you refer existence to the ■ and not ■ yourself, again, the modality (*al-hukm*) of your existence within the Real ■ appertain to you. And if you consider yourself to ■ the existentialized, then again the modality appertains to you without ■ doubt. Yet if it is the Real who determines, it is only in the sense that He bestows existence upon you, so that both the modality and its determination appertain to you.[6]

It has already ■ ■ that the association of necessity and possibility through a single definition must portray them, either as co-existent realities or ■ subject and ■ predicate. If they are viewed ■ being co-existent, the becoming of an autonomy may signify, either an independent occurrence whose existence actualizes its own volition, ■ a creative ■ which gives rise ■ ■ ■ whose separation is identified with its freedom. Needless to say, the former is the view which perpetrates atheism, while the latter ■ the ■ which prevails in ■ various forms of deism. Moreover, even if the necessary and the possible ■ considered in ■ of subject–predicate relations, this belief still affirms the autonomy of the existentialized, seeing that it is the uniqueness of the expression which conveys the particularity of its own latency within the subject. Yet, since that which appertains ■ the Divine Intention is only the movement of becoming as such, the possible manifests ■ ■ autonomy whose existence actualizes its own modality.

Thus, according to ■ consideration of exteriority, the existence of an autonomy ■ to actualize a collectivity of possibilities which constitute its nature, so ■ in this respect, the singleness of the Divine Intention can be portrayed in terms of two concomitant definitions. On the ■ hand, the arising of the determinations which characterize the modality of ■ particular non-necessity depicts the Divine Intention as the principle of diversification, while ■ the other, the perpetual existence of ■ autonomy which ■ to actualize these determinations depicts It ■ the principle of existentialization. However, this concomitance does not appear ■ be mutually exclusive, because the coincidence of existence and becoming which gives rise to that autonomy, presents its determinations as causes which necessitate the actualization of their own effects. It is for this reason that the perpetual effusion of being tends to be perceived in ■ of ■ and effect, and that the Divine Intention appears to be confined ■ the bringing about of ■ ■ of primary causes whose manifestation expresses their own particular necessity. ■ in reality the Divine Intention ■ the sole principle of becoming, so that there ■ ■ ■ scope for ■ intermediate causality. Therefore, the singleness of dependence which characterizes the existentialized cannot be affirmed unless the mutual exclusion of existentialization and diversification ■ recognized in respect of every facet of being; because the former

designates the perpetuity of becoming which is perceived as permanence, and the latter designates the coming about of a new configuration whose modality is perceived as an autonomy.

non-necessity stipulates the independence of a reality from its expressions, the necessity which denotes the concealment of the principle of existentialization suggests the essential identity of cause and effect, whereby the definition of the always determines the nature of the other. Consequently, this interdependence constitutes the foundation of any empirical science, empiricism consists of the study of effects with the intention of determining their This observation is by no means confined to the present, for as the Shaykh explains in the teenth chapter of his *Futûhât*:

> The validity of our knowledge of God the Most High infers two assignations; the recognition of the Divine Essence which is by virtue of objectivity (*shuhûd*) and perception – though latter implies unlimited perception, and the recognition of His Divinity which is derived from two ordinances – though it may be derived only from one of these two, which is the bestowal. The other ordinance is comprised of observation (*nazr*) and reasoning (*istidlâl*), and is the [foundation of] acquired knowledge (*al-ma'rifah al-muktasiba*). As for the knowledge of the Divine Preference, [we will add] that preference contradicts the singleness of the Divine Intention, that its relation to the – once He is qualified by it – may appertain only to that which is possible for Him, and not to that which necessary for His being.[7]

Since the knowledge of Divinity encompasses all the domains of existence, it necessarily appertains to any science which conveys a recognition of truth. In this light the two ordinances which define the scope of this knowledge can be seen to reflect the modalities of existentialization and diversification. That is, because the modality of diversification gives rise to that which does express a latency, it could correspond to the bestowed knowledge, seeing that the latter appears as intuition which is not related to any endeavour the part of the recipient, and moreover, its very recognition presents a of premises whose determinations are verified by the observation of the unfoldment of their necessities. But if the autonomy of relativity is not acknowledged as the evidence of its absolute dependence, any description of its is bound to portray it in terms of a predetermined unfoldment of a multiplicity of principles whose becoming is inexplicable in itself. Due to the determinism – the intermediate causality – that it delineates, the knowledge of Divinity does encompass the coincidence of existence and becoming which designates the singleness of the Divine Intention. Therefore the Divine Preference – whose meaning suggests a necessity which is not necessary in itself – refer exclusively to the domain of the possible, that the polarization of inexplicability and necessity is valid only in respect of the knowledge of Divinity, and

in respect of the recognition of the Divine Essence.

Similarly, acquired knowledge reflects the concealment of existentialization, and therefore, [redacted] though it is able to predict actual occurrences, [redacted] internal consistency of the causality which defines this knowledge [redacted] appertain only [redacted] abstract necessity. [redacted] then the validity of the forecast tends [redacted] depict the [redacted] a relative expression of [redacted] immutable law, and consequently causality tends [redacted] be identified with the immutability which characterizes subject–predicate relations. In this respect, abstract necessity implies that the latency of each particular expression is inherent to the principle which necessitates its occurrence, and yet it is unable [redacted] account for the diversification which establishes this principle in the first place. For abstract necessity therefore, the multiplicity constitutes [redacted] *a priori* assumption rather than [redacted] causal unfoldment, while the intelligible latency which it affirms negates the meaning of simplicity; hence, both subject–predicate relations and abstract necessity can neither describe unity [redacted] can they [redacted] for the arising of complexity.

Within the frame of Western philosophy, this particular limitation of abstract necessity has been pointed out by Bertrand Russell, though his criticism focused upon the inability of subject–predicate relations to provide a consistent account of plurality. In fact, the clarity of Russell's exposition spelt the end of the long reign of Idealism, [redacted] the approach which had predominated in mainstream European thought since the advent of Neo-Platonism. For he demonstrated that the basic premise of any Idealistic doctrine is always derived from the concept that plurality is an expression of [redacted] single principle.

One of these doctrines – whose popularity could be ascribed to the fact that its author had formulated the method of differential calculus, rather than to the impregnability of its internal consistency – is the Monadology of Leibnitz, which due to its simplicity displays the pitfalls of Idealism very clearly. According to Leibnitz the universe is composed of an infinity of monads, or: 'simple substances without parts and without windows through which anything could come in [redacted] go out.'[6] Yet in spite of their absolute exclusivity, these monads combine to form aggregates which exhibit a single property; the character of this property is determined by the presence of a dominant monad within each collectivity, and Leibnitz insists that the dominant monad does not modify any of the monads which form the aggregate, since this would have negated their exclusivity. Evidently his monads share all the characteristics of subject–predicate relations, for just like the dominant monad, a subject is an intelligible singleness whose synthesis lends a single identity [redacted] its aspects, while they express the qualities which their [redacted] definitions delineate. [redacted] unlike predicates whose abstraction [redacted] only describe the subject, the monads do possess [redacted] substance which somehow coincides

with their uniqueness, and therefore this coincidence suggests either that the subject is an intelligible reality or that the dominant monad co-exists with the aggregate. Naturally, due to the coincidence of uniqueness [redacted] substance that he postulates, Leibnitz has to ascribe [redacted] latter view, and consequently he [redacted] into another insoluble, because [redacted] exclusivity of the monads on the one hand and their co-existence [redacted] the other [redacted] imply complete isolation, so that his model cannot [redacted] for the very evidence presented by relativity. Thus he seeks to explain the common context with which the monads [redacted] to interact, by introducing a principle of pre-established harmony. The universal validity of his pre-established harmony portrays the independent unfoldment of each monad [redacted] which is synchronized with the unfoldment of the totality, like in the [redacted] of two choirs which [redacted] singing from an identical score. However, since this pre-established harmony cannot be an external reality, its universality entails that it must be inherent to all the monads, and it has [redacted] considered [redacted] being integral [redacted] their essential definition – an integrality which contradicts the simplicity of the monads. This inconsistency is [redacted] particular to Leibnitz, for it [redacted] arise, [redacted] one form or another, whenever existence is described in accordance with subject–predicate relations.

The coming about of such intelligible formulations whose definitions describe Reality [redacted] a synthetic whole, is explained by the Shaykh in the light of the dissociation of an existential autonomy from its origin:

> His – the Most High – word: 'We have not granted them but insufficient knowledge',[9] does not refer to the bestowal [redacted] such; rather [redacted] conveys two considerations: the one which is indicated by the 'granting', and the other which is indicated by 'insufficiency' (*qalîlan*) – in the sense of independence (*istiqlâl*). Namely, [this [redacted] conveys the following address:] I have not granted them from the knowledge except of that which they have assumed as [redacted] burden for themselves, and that which you have [redacted] sought We did not confer [upon you], wherefore you do not possess it! It is this mode of bestowal which gives rise to empiricism (*'ulûm an-nazar*), that is, the knowledge which is obtained through intellectual understanding.[10]

Since empiricism strives to describe existential phenomena in [redacted] of abstract necessity, the validity of the causality delineated by a theoretical model is established by virtue of the correspondence of its predictions with actuality. Therefore, the principle which determines the truthfulness of the model is the observation (*an-nazar*), and [redacted] the internal [redacted] sistency of the mathematics which formulate it. The insufficiency of this approach cannot but refer to the dependence of observation upon the consideration of exteriority, or the apparent independence of a reality whose becoming is effected by existentialization [redacted] diversification, because this dependence entails that the model [redacted] encompass the coincidence of existence and becoming which establishes the

phenomenon, [illegible] though it may describe the necessities which govern its autonomy. In other words, since empirical enquiry – by its very definition – focuses upon existential appearance, the knowledge that it conveys [illegible] affirm the singleness of the Divine Intention, and therefore it has to [illegible] regarded [illegible] insufficient. Moreover, since the association of an occurrence with an immutable principle depicts the former [illegible] relative expression of [illegible] latter, existential causality tends to be identified with [illegible] immutability; hence due [illegible] the generality which designates the [illegible] of immutability, in itself the principle [illegible] indicate [illegible] preference with respect to the actualization of any of the intelligible latencies which [illegible] inherent to it, and consequently the model [illegible] attribute selection to a process which is other than the principle. Thus, at times the selection is referred to the conditions that precede the occurrence, while [illegible] others it is attributed to the Divine Preference. In this respect, that which distinguishes present-day empiricism and monotheistic rationalism is not the method by which they define their respective models, but their perception of the origin of determinism.

However, in the light of the singleness of the Divine Intention, determinism arises hand in hand with the necessities which characterize the autonomy of the possible, seeing that these necessities outline [illegible] scope within which the effects of existentialization and diversification appear [illegible] conformity [illegible] the determinations that constitute its particular nature. The Shaykh alludes to this in numerous places, and quite frequently [illegible] tends to corroborate his explanation by referring to the Quranic word: 'We have revealed within each sphere the order which appertains [illegible] it.'[11] For example, he writes in the sixtieth chapter of his *Futûhât*:

> Thereupon God the Most High invested these governing principles (*al-wulâh*) with authority in order [illegible] they may establish their own representatives and lieutenants within the [illegible] spheres, (and accordingly), every sphere has [illegible] lieutenant which acts [illegible] warden for these (governing principles) by observing the affairs of the tangible domain in conformity to that which those governing principles dictate. And this is indicated by His word: 'We have revealed within each sphere the order which appertains to it.'[12]

As the [illegible] indicates, the [illegible] – or the order – of a sphere is [illegible] an actualization of a latent principle, seeing that it is revealed within the sphere itself, [illegible] that its becoming coincides with its existence. In this [illegible] the becoming of [illegible] sphere establishes a [illegible] set of determining principles, while the presence of the lieutenants – namely, the determinations of the spheres whose existentialization precedes this [illegible] becoming – within this newly established scope requires that its nature should conform to their dictates. Though the autonomy of [illegible] sphere requires that the effects of diversification that manifest within its domain should conform to the determinations which constitute its nature, and

[redacted] it should be emphasized that it is this conformity which establishes it as a distinct reality, still, the very existence of the context within which it manifests dictates that the [redacted] of the sphere must [redacted] form to the determinations of the context, because [redacted] respect of the [redacted] text the sphere [redacted] perceived [redacted] an effect of diversification, or [redacted] the arising of greater complexity. The [redacted] of the [redacted] sphere could be described, therefore, as [redacted] interaction between the effects of diversification and a [redacted] which is characterized by permanence, where the precedence of the latter signifies a lesser complexity rather than a temporal succession. Permanence (*daymûmiyya*) should not be confused with immutability, for it denotes the perpetual existentialization of an autonomy, whereas immutability infers the precedence of [redacted] possibility with regard [redacted] the actualization of its latency. That is to say, permanence refers to the existential reality of the possible, while immutability reflects the Primacy (*al-awwaliyya*) of the Divinity in respect of the degrees that It encompasses. The Shaykh explains this distinction as follows:

> Know, that God the Most High is the First whose Primacy is not established due to any succession, for It does not relate to anything which subsists in Him or that which does not subsist in Him. In respect of His Primacy He is the One (*al-wâhid*) – may [redacted] be exalted – and there is no thing . . . The existence of the world cannot be except from God, [so that it is brought about] by virtue of His Being and [redacted] order which is not [inherent to] It. If [redacted] were [inherent to] [redacted] Being, it would not have been additional and He would have been complex; thus [redacted] Primacy is affirmed due to that order. Yet as [redacted] have already confirmed that nothing may partake in His Primacy, and that It is not established due to succession, . . . [redacted] additional order is [inherent to] His Being, and this order [redacted] be either existent [redacted] non-existent.[13]

As the Primacy is affirmed due to a principle which is not inherent to the Divine Essence, while that principle does not effect the Primacy, not [redacted] in the sense that subsequence implies precedence, the Primacy must refer to the dissociation, or independence, of the Unity from [redacted] that depends upon It. Similarly, when the mutual exclusion of existentialization and diversification is viewed in terms of permanence (a nature which is certainly not inherent to their essential definition), the arising of an autonomy is perceived as [redacted] becoming of an original nature whose primacy is not established due to comparison. The dissociation of this primacy from the modality of permanence that it determines, presents its originality as [redacted] immutable essence (*'ayni-th thâbita*) which cannot be actualized in the domains of permanence, seeing that its essential definition reflects severance and not temporal unfoldment of [redacted] eternal principle. On the other hand, since the essential definition of permanence denotes the concealment of the principle of existentialization within its scope, becoming manifests [redacted] [redacted] ever increasing diversity whose [redacted] is modified by the necessities which constitute the [redacted] of its place of

manifestation. Consequently, it is the conformity of newness to the determinations of the [redacted] that presents the latter [redacted] a complex whole, because it defines [redacted] of common parameters which depict a reality as being both a part and an autonomy, unlike the uniqueness that appertains to subject–predicate relations, whose singularity portrays each part as though it were [redacted] simple aspect. But then complexity should not always be equated with relativity, since the co-existence encompassed by the domain of permanence denotes only conformity to a single [redacted] of necessities, and not mutual interactions between autonomies. In fact this asymmetry is the principle that distinguishes greater complexity from the context within which it arises, since the determinations of the latter [redacted] incorporated by the nature of the former, even though the [redacted] is [redacted] modified by the manifestation of newness. Accordingly, this asymmetry signifies that the arising of greater complexity [redacted] actualizes [redacted] pre-established latency, for it affirms the dissociation of [redacted] from the [redacted] of its appearance. This perspective portrays greater complexity [redacted] though [redacted] is comprised of two [redacted] of determinations: those which manifest its particularity, and those which express its conformity to the necessities dictated by its place of manifestation; the former can be equated therefore, with the diversification that gives rise to its newness, while the latter can be identified with the permanence of the conditions which surround it. Nevertheless, as the Shaykh points out, this perspective negates the singleness of the Divine Intention, because the innate ability to conform [redacted] [redacted] condition is never established through an intermediate cause – even if this conformity is affirmed in terms of asymmetry; in reality, every inclination which is expressed by [redacted] autonomy must be inherent to its very nature. Moreover, this perspective implies that the action of diversification is confined to the bringing about of newness, seeing that its validity appertains to the dissociation of existentialization from the arising of greater complexity, whereby it has to convey the becoming of [redacted] new nature in terms of [redacted] additional Act of Creation.

> Days [redacted] of many kinds, some of them [redacted] long while others [redacted] short, and the shortest among them is known as the singular duration to which refers [the Quranic word]: 'Every day He is involved in [a different) matter.'[14] He names the singular duration 'day' due to the [redacted] circumstances that arise within it, and therefore it is the shortest time span [possible] though its length [redacted] be delimited. As for the type of day which is defined by convention, it is divided by hours that [redacted] divided by minutes, and so on *ad infinitum*; however, this is acknowledged by some who go [redacted] to divide minutes into seconds, and since they subject these durations to the rule of number, it becomes their principle. For numbers are infinite, and therefore the division in accordance with their principle [redacted] [redacted] itself infinite. Yet some people uphold that the division [of time] is [redacted] finite, whereby they consider it in terms of finitude and affirm [redacted] time is [redacted]

existential reality. Without a doubt, anything which is brought into existence can be finite, though he who upholds the opposing view asserts that inasmuch as the finite can be enumerated it is not an existential reality, and that it cannot be qualified by finitude just as numbers are infinite. This results in the [illegible] of the singular substance (*al-jawhar al-fard*) even though tangibility (*al-jism*) can be divided *ad infinitum*. The empiricists consider it as a contentious point, but this stems from lack of propriety and the quest for proven formulations, for this [question] has been clarified by the indisputable [illegible] (*al-khabar as-sahih*) which affirms that one of God's appellations is the name 'the Era' (*ad-dahr*).[15]

Though continuity is perceived as an infinitesimal progression, where each configuration is considered to be a minute modification of the one which precedes it, the Shaykh states in no uncertain terms that the unfoldment of change is discrete, and that it is only the association of time with number which presents it as an infinitesimal sequence. However, the discrete [illegible] of change [illegible] be deduced from the character of continuity, because the necessities which constitute its [illegible] require that the effects of diversification that manifest within its scope should appear as gradual transformation, and it is this gradation which tends to be identified with the series of number. Once continuity is envisaged in [illegible] of number, the abstraction of the one appears to determine the actuality of the other, since the universal validity which appertains to mathematics [illegible] to be [illegible] principial than the particularities that it describes. Thus rather than acknowledging them as valid descriptions of the deterministic relations which constitute the [illegible] of an autonomous context, these abstract relations are identified with the Order of Permanence. However, in reality the Order of Permanence assimilates both the features which require the conformity of greater complexity to its place of manifestation, and the particular necessities which distinguish the autonomy of the latter for as long as it is re-existentialized. In this sense, the Order of Permanence is entirely synonymous with the knowledge of Divinity. Abstraction, whether it is formulated in [illegible] of subject-predicate relations or the rules of mathematics, [illegible] only convey infinity, because the necessity that it delineates invariably infers an interminable chain of interdependencies. Consequently, as finitude is established through asymmetric relations, abstraction cannot depict multiplicity except in terms of synthesis, that is, a symmetric relation between infinity and oneness; for synthesis unifies any collectivity by presenting it as a conceptual differentiation of a single subject, so that in this [illegible] finitude is identified with intelligible uniqueness. Thus, when the Shaykh affirms that 'inasmuch as the finite can be enumerated it is not an existential reality,' he could be indicating that since the conclusions obtained through enumeration are derived from abstract necessity – as [illegible] necessity which refers to the symmetry of infinity and oneness – the causality that they define does not reflect

in any way determinations which appertain to the Order of Per- because It is upon irreversibility. Further, since he distinguishes between the division by hours and minutes and the division *infinitum*, this but suggest that, up to a point, abstract necessity may provide an appropriate representation of relativity, in spite of the conceptual of the model it dictates. But the validity of the representation will appertain to the effects of the deterministic relations and not to the rules of abstract necessity itself, seeing that their correspondence only reflects the fact that both express necessity.

If that correspondence is not acknowledged as such, it will obscure the distinction between immutability and permanence, seeing that in the model is regarded as the actual causality that brings the described effect. Thus any understanding of relativity which is upon the identification of abstract necessity with the Order of Permanence to incorporate two of truths in order to accommodate the distinct which their necessities convey. For while abstraction encompasses every conceivable necessity – even of a construct such as flatland – the Order of Permanence affirms only necessities of Being. It was this question which prompted David Hume to distinguish between truths of fact and truths of logic, whereby he went on to that any synthetic conclusion which was derived through their association had to be but a conditioned perception. Though his formulation – which has been nicknamed the 'fork of Hume' – does affirm the distinction of permanence and immutability, it achieves this end through the denial of the deterministic relations, because it portrays existence as a collectivity of dissociated facts. Notwithstanding its negation of order, since the 'fork of Hume' does convey the aforementioned distinction, the indubitability of this principle dealt a severe blow to credibility of eighteenth-century Idealism, simply because its premises could not accommodate a complexity of two natures.

This would have spelt the end for Idealism as a widely accepted doctrine, if it for Immanuel Kant who suggested that determinism appertained to the mode of appearance of the world and its reality. That is to say, for Kant, the appearance of the world always conforms to our ability to experience it, wherefore he distinguishes between the world as it is in itself and the world as an appearance. Of the former – he claims – there is nothing we can infer except that it exists, though can with regard to the latter that it reflects the necessities which constitute the possibility of human experience, seeing that the world as appearance is the very of our perception. Or in his own words: 'The *a priori* conditions of a possible experience in general, are at the same time conditions of objects of experience.'[16] The interdependence he outlines between possible experience and objects of experience implies that our subjectivity determines the objects of knowledge of

which [redacted] world is comprised, so that the uniformity of appearance that [redacted] recognize must be a reflection of [redacted] own make-up and [redacted] an expression of the nature of the world as such. From this premise Kant [redacted] on [redacted] conclude that determinism is an intelligible structure which [redacted] superimpose upon the world, and in this respect his doctrine does reflect the dissociation of exteriority and interiority; for just as the world – which he [redacted] to be the only subject of [redacted] perception – is [redacted] expressed through the contents of our understanding, exteriority does not manifest the reality which lends it being, and just [redacted] [redacted] understanding is confined to the necessities dictated by [redacted] perception, the existence of [redacted] autonomy manifests the determinations of its own nature. However, the identification of the 'possibility of experience' with the origin of the objects of knowledge suggests that the unknowability of the 'single subject' of human perception is differentiated through our faculties in the same manner that predicates differentiate their subject, because this identification defines these objects [redacted] actualizations of the possibilities inherent to perception. The segregation of the 'world in itself' and the 'world [redacted] [redacted] appearance' is absolutely crucial for Kant's doctrine, since [redacted] comprises its sole defence from the 'horns' of Hume's dilemma; therefore, rather than shying away from the ambiguity which surrounds the coalescence of objectivity and subjectivity, Kant proceeded to define it in [redacted] of the coincidence of otherness and [redacted] Thus, according to Kant, the product yielded by the synthesis of predicates is not quite the same as their subject, [redacted] in other words, inasmuch as the subject [redacted] be known synthesis does [redacted] encompass its nature, and yet inasmuch as human experience determines the appearance of the subject, that appearance must be the same as this synthesis, though its illusory nature still indicates the real existence of the subject. The ambivalence of 'not quite' provides Kant with the scope to arrive at synthetic conclusions at his convenience, for whenever he wishes to avoid [redacted] disagreement with the requirements of Hume's 'fork', he emphasizes the essential otherness of appearance and reality, and whenever he inclines to affirm the validity of the deterministic relations – like those which apply to space and time – [redacted] refers to the sameness of an illusory predicate and its illusory subject. Due to the ambivalence from which he derives all his demarcations, they [redacted] [redacted] present a coherent model of reality; but then incoherence does not perturb Kant in the least, since he equates it with paradox [redacted] regards it [redacted] the ultimate proof of the truth of his doctrine.

The paradoxical formulations that predominate in latter-day Idealism should not be confused with the concomitant considerations which describe the nature of complexity, for these paradoxes always try to integrate two definitions whose distinctiveness defies synthesis, so that their association within the 'singleness' of the Kantian subject must

present it ▬ 'not quite' the one or the other. In contradistinction, the absolute dependence of the possible constitutes ▬ essential definition whose singleness gives rise to two perspectives; namely, its essential dependence delineates both its dissociation – seeing that indigence ▬ applies to the Independent – and its ▬ – seeing that this ▬ indigence implies that the possible has no being of its own. Though in effect Kant agrees that 'inasmuch as the finite can be enumerated it is ▬ an existential reality', still, ▬ he attributes the existence of ordered reality ▬ ▬ subjectivity, ▬ ▬ acknowledge ▬ autonomy of the Singular Substance only as ■ passive matrix which would resemble the Greek ▬ cept of *hylê*. That is, since ▬ ▬ that Tangibility (*al-jism*) – or in his terminology, appearance – does ▬ express the necessities ▬ characterize Its scope, he ▬ consider It as a substance whose passivity synthesizes every possible perception. In this light, Kant's attempt to prove the validity of ■ *priori* synthetic propositions resulted in the denial of the Order of Permanence, seeing that by regarding the world ▬ an intelligible reality and relegating human perception to the realms of imagination, ▬ managed to 're-unify' existence ▬ the cost of proclaiming objectivity ▬ being null and void.

As the Shaykh points out ▬ the fifty-ninth chapter of his *Futûhât*, the essential definition of an era consists of ■ unique duration whose extent can be neither delimited nor subdivided, though its finitude must imply that its cessation coincides with the becoming of another era. The finitude of a non-relative duration cannot but designate the principle of change as such, wherefore the occurrence of the era within the context of permanence has to be associated with an effect of diversification. Moreover, 'the new circumstances which arise within it' indicate ▬ the becoming of the era outlines a new context whose ▬ conforms to the necessities of permanence, with permanence presenting change as a gradual transformation. In other words, since in itself ▬ ▬ is but a unique duration whose exclusivity implies dissociation, ■ is only the interaction of endurance and newness which gives rise to continuous transience. Due ▬ the dissociation of greater complexity from the con- ▬ within which it becomes, the necessities that appertain to permanence and to which transience conforms, cannot be recognized as existential realities in the domain of the latter, for which reason these necessities ▬ manifested ▬ the implicit laws that govern the progression of relativity. Evidently, it is this hidden governance that tends to ▬ interpreted ▬ pre-established harmony, however in reality, the term 'pre' would ▬ suggest the precedence of ■ principle with regard ▬ a particular, rather it will denote the perpetual re-establishment of ■ particular ▬ of necessities. For the singleness of the Divine Intention signifies that the becoming of transience coincides with the establishment of per- ▬ Hence it is the determinations of continuity which require that

within the domain of transience the manifestation of an autonomy should be perceived in terms of interactions (*nikâh*) and productions (*tawallud*), or that each [illegible] should appear to evolve from the eras that preceded it in time, whereby the becoming of [illegible] tends [illegible] experienced as the conflict between originality [illegible] inertia. That is, in linguistic terms, continuity lends to the reality of [illegible] directional sense, and consequently it [illegible] to [illegible] 'that which replaces the old'. Yet the essential dependence of the possible implies [illegible] (*hudûth*) is an assignation of the coincidence of existence and becoming, [illegible] better, of the non-necessity of that which is brought about by virtue of the Divine Intention, so that in this sense irreversible progression is an expression of perpetual [illegible] and not [illegible] effect of permanence. Moreover, since the only distinction which may be defined between transience and permanence is the greater degree of concealment of the newness of [illegible] latter, relative movement can be described [illegible] the effect of the degree of concealment of newness, where the more explicit [illegible] to shift in relation to the more implicit. These two perspectives are discussed in the forty-eighth chapter of the *Futûhât* – whose title happens to be: 'The gnosis of "It is like this due to that", which is (the gnosis of) the establishment of latency and causality' – where [illegible] Shaykh writes:

> God the Most High has stipulated that [illegible] are of the plants by saying: 'God has caused you to sprout from [illegible] earth like plants',[17] meaning that you sprout in the manner of the plants because your sprouting is plant-like, just as [illegible] points out elsewhere in relation to becoming (*takwîn*) and th[illegible] which [illegible] effects, that 'once We wish [illegible] thing, all We say to it is "be" and it is'.[18] Thus He refers the becoming to Himself, and similarly He relates the manifestation of the plants [illegible] the plants, so understand! For this [illegible] we affirm, that the diversity of states appertains only to the diversity of times, [illegible] that the diversity of time appertains only to the diversity of [illegible] – and by [illegible] I [illegible] the [illegible] of the spheres. Consequently, it is due to the diversity of the movement of the spheres that the period of day and night arises, whereby years and months [illegible] defined.[19]

The stipulation that we sprout from the earth assimilates both of the aforementioned perspectives, seeing that on the one hand it affirms [illegible] relative origin, which is the earth, while [illegible] the other, it ascribes [illegible] our becoming a sprouting which is plant-like.

Irrespective of the hidden meaning that it indicates and which the Shaykh enjoins us to understand, this plant-like sprouting is considered by him to be entirely synonymous with the mode of becoming encapsulated by the Divine Utterance 'be', and therefore it affirms the perspective which negates any intermediate causality. It is only after this clarification that the Shaykh proceeds to [illegible] the particular productions which effect relative time, for the permanence of their occur[illegible] affirms the [illegible] of their perpetual becoming only in an implicit

manner, whereas the endurance of their necessities manifests causality explicitly. Though [redacted] cannot claim that the Shaykh's allusions [redacted] entirely obvious, or that his [redacted] of the term *zamân* always implies the [redacted] meaning, still the conclusion that the movement of the spheres is the direct [redacted] of relative time is quite unavoidable. In other words, this [redacted] that the degrees of transience which characterize [redacted] various spheres of relativity, constitute the reality of periodicity. But since the diversity of time is an expression of the [redacted] of being, it has to manifest change as such and [redacted] periodicity, wherefore time, or – and bearing in mind the ambiguous usage of the term *zamân* – the era, cannot be identified with recurrence, nor can it be considered as the reality of relative time. Thus, [redacted] the [redacted] cannot be associated with periodicity – and it may be [redacted] in passing that this dissociation arises due to the asymmetry which characterizes the becoming of greater complexity – its duration 'cannot be delimited', seeing that the delimiting of time may only [redacted] obtained through periodicity. For this reason, the finitude of [redacted] [redacted] is described in [redacted] of the arising of another era whose becoming coincides with its cessation, and therefore the dawning of a [redacted] era entails that the necessities which reflected the uniqueness of the previous era have become invalid. However, this does [redacted] apply to those necessities which reflect the permanence of the Divine Order within the sphere of transience, or [redacted] those autonomies whose persistence is required by their own nature.

The persistence of forms and their ability to adapt to change is the principle which underlies the evolutionary process as it is conceived by both Darwin and Lamarck. While Lamarck suggested that the response of an autonomy to its surrounding conditions is the sole cause for change in [redacted] species, Darwinism upholds that the interaction between [redacted] autonomy and its environment [redacted] only as a selective principle, in the [redacted] that it determines whether a particular mutation is capable of survival. For according to Darwinism, change is [redacted] product of random mutations whose endurance reflects their conformity to the necessities of natural selection.

The radical variance of these two evolutionary interpretations springs from the [redacted] in which they perceive the [redacted] of change; for Lamarckism envisages it as a self-sustaining gradual accumulation, whereas Darwinism depicts it [redacted] [redacted] collection of unpredictable events whose continuity is established by virtue of the permanent features of the context within which they take place. Namely, the fundamental premise of Darwinism affirms that change is independent of the autonomies which it effects, seeing that it does not associate the [redacted] of the mutation with any causal necessity which could [redacted] referred to the mutated species. Yet, since it considers the mutations themselves to [redacted] effects of relative causes, Darwinism cannot acknowledge change as an

order of becoming, and consequently it has to attribute these [redacted] to the actualization of immutable probabilities whose latency seems to be inherent to [redacted]

In contradistinction, Lamarckism [redacted] that the evolutionary process is a product of internal endeavour, [redacted] that it identifies the source of change with an ability of [redacted] species to transform its [redacted] make-up in response to the conditions that it confronts. Moreover, since the endurance of this self-induced change requires that its originator should be able to transmit it to its offspring, the basic premise of Lamarckism has to infer the inheritance of acquired character. Notwithstanding whether or not the inheritance of acquired character happens to reflect [redacted] aspect of the natural order, the premises of Lamarckism still can- [redacted] account for the divergence of [redacted] evolutionary path in [redacted] of internal endeavour; because the relationship of [redacted] species to its environment necessarily implies [redacted] multitude of possible responses, all of which provide it with [redacted] equal incentive for change, and therefore Lamarckism has to incorporate some kind of a selective process in order to explain the occurrence of [redacted] particular transformation in preference to another.

As far [redacted] this author is aware, modern adaptations of Lamarckian theory do [redacted] offer a conclusive [redacted] to this question, though there is [redacted] hint of ambivalence in their attempts to prove the existential validity of the inheritance of acquired character. However, if this selective process is equated with conscious will, this suggests that the latter is the real cause for change, or that [redacted] can mould ourselves in whichever way [redacted] choose; it is no wonder then that Lamarck is hailed in certain circles [redacted] a champion of holistic science. Whatever the case may be, the fact remains that Lamarckism depicts diversity in terms of the actualizations of the probabilities which are inherent to the relationship between [redacted] species and its environment, and in this respect, [redacted] has to be considered as an Idealistic doctrine.

Darwinism does not share in this predicament, since it attributes the occurrence of change to indeterminate causes which are independent of the natures that they modify, whereby it portrays the divergence of an evolutionary path as [redacted] interaction between the permanence of natural selection and the transience of [redacted] autonomy. Further, the randomness by which it qualifies change implies that it is only the necessities of continuity which present this indeterminacy as a cumulative progression, so that for Darwinism, evolution is not [redacted] self-propagating chain of causal relations but [redacted] becoming which conforms to [redacted] particular [redacted] of necessities.

Generally speaking, the randomness of change that it affirms is considered to be the major obstacle for the acceptance of Darwinism, because randomness is regarded [redacted] being entirely incompatible with the

harmony displayed by the natural world. On the other hand, as it does not include any reference [redacted] preference, some view it as being [redacted] completely mechanistic that they have had to declare it [redacted] anathema to religious doctrine. It is quite astonishing – if [redacted] may venture to [redacted] – that the same theory can be rejected due to its being too random for some and too deterministic for others. However, both the belief in premeditated design – which confuses the singleness of the Divine Intention with preference – and the concept of causal unfoldment, avoid the implications of indeterminacy by affirming necessity retrospectively, wherefore they [redacted] neither acknowledge the dissociation of the Unity from all [redacted] depends upon It, nor can they convey the freedom and responsibility implied by the coincidence of existence and becoming. Though this statement appears to deny such accounts of Creation [redacted] the one which is recorded in the *Book of Genesis*, this is simply [redacted] the case, for the contradiction has to [redacted] understood in the light of the mutual exclusion which characterizes the manifestation of the Order of Per[redacted] And it is perhaps interesting to note that these accounts never suggest that the Divine Will is [redacted] relation which arises between simplicity and complexity; on the contrary, they always emphasize that the becoming of an autonomy coincides with the proclamation of Intention. Some of them [redacted] insist that Creation is brought about *ex nihilo*, meaning that it does not actualize any latency. The metaphors which constitute these descriptions – like the Days of Creation, or the four humours of which Universal Nature is composed – should not be interpreted only in [redacted] dance with the tangible forms that they present, because the transience of tangibility is determined by the uniqueness of an era, while the passing away of an [redacted] signifies that its metaphors have become invalid. The eternal validity of [redacted] metaphor appertains to the Order of Permanence that it reflects and not to the transience which constitutes its form. However, due to the dissociation of greater complexity from the sphere within which it arises, the former presents those necessities which it assimilates from the sphere [redacted] integral features of its own nature, [redacted] that the segregation of the ephemeral from the eternal with respect to the metaphor, is likely to be tainted by conjecture. In this light, the reinterpretation of Genesis in accordance with Darwinian principles does not demonstrate anything except the predominance of the evolutionary metaphor during the present era. But similarly, the materialism that [redacted] [redacted] pervade our time should not be judged in terms of the monotheism which predominated in other eras, rather it has to be assessed in accordance with the truths that its metaphors convey in respect of the Order of Permanence, even if its premises deny the existence of [redacted] deity. Is this [redacted] the attitude (*adab*) that the Shaykh himself follows, and which [redacted] recommends in these lines?

Thus the rationalist proclaims:
'In everything He [redacted] a sign which proves [redacted] He [redacted] unique'
While the illuminated recites [redacted] same verse in accordance with [redacted] interpretation:
'In everything He [redacted] a sign which proves that [redacted] is its essence.'[20]

NOTES

1. [redacted] ch. 50, p.8.
2. *Fusûs*; Word of Abraham, p.92.
3. *Futûhât* ch. 19, p.167.
4. *Futûhât* ch. 50, p.271.
5. Qur'an XXXVII, 164.
6. *Fusûs*, Word of Abraham, p.83.
7. *Futûhât* ch. 17, pp.162–3.
8. *Mondology*, p.7.
9. Qur'an XVII, 85.
10. *Futûhât* ch. 46, p.254.
11. Qur'an XLI, 12.
12. [redacted] ch. 60, p.295.
13. *Futûhât* ch. 59, p.291.
14. Qur'an LV; 29.
15. *Futûhât* ch. 59, p.292.
16. *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. by N. Kemp, London, 1933, A III.
17. Qur'an LXXI, 17.
18. Qur'an XVI, 40.
19. *Futûhât* ch. 48, p.265.
20. *Futûhât* ch. 50, p.272.

Abu Madyan and Ibn 'Arabi

CLAUDE ADDAS

During [illegible] research I carried out some years ago, in the course of my work [illegible] the biography of the Shaykh al-Akbar, I repeatedly came up against questions which, through lack of time and above all through lack of documentation, I [illegible] obliged to leave unanswered. I should like, here, [illegible] try [illegible] provide something of [illegible] reply to [illegible] of those questions which it seemed [illegible] important to throw light [illegible] because of its involve- [illegible] in the destiny of Ibn 'Arabi, and, more generally, in the development of the *tasawwuf* from the thirteenth century onwards: Why does Abu Madyan, whom he never met, have so much importance for Ibn 'Arabi that he constantly refers to him in his work, and continually adds [illegible] his declarations of admiration and respect for him, [illegible] often giving him the title of *shaykh al-mashâyikh*, the 'Master of masters'?

It is true that Ibn 'Arabi did not invent this *laqab*. By applying it to him, he [illegible] simply conforming to [illegible] practice which began, it seems, during the actual lifetime of the Saint of Bugia. The Arabs, I well know, have at all times shown an inordinate taste for hyperbole. Chroniclers and hagiographers very liberally give out dithyrambic titles which are [illegible] always justified: an annoying habit which Ibn Jubayr, a contemporary of Ibn 'Arabi, and a merciless observer of the customs of his time, [illegible] demns on a memorable [illegible] of his *Rihla*.[1]

But in this case it is not a question of that. The author of the *Futûhât* never writes anything unthinkingly. For him, eulogy is not mere rhetorical decoration. The superlative which he applies to Abu Madyan [illegible] [illegible] therefore be interpreted in his writing [illegible] the result of [illegible] conditioned reflex, or even as [illegible] purely formal mark of respect towards an elder. With these words, Ibn 'Arabi [illegible] not so much to pay tribute to the spiritual pre-eminence of the Saint of Bugia [illegible] to express the profound and sincere veneration which he has for him.

As a [illegible] of fact, [illegible] 'Arabi shares this veneration with many Muslims both past and present. The processions which cause a large crowd to gather round the mausoleum of Abu Madyan [illegible] Tlemcen each year during the religious festivals, bears adequate witness to the vitality and ardour of the cult of which he is the object. Two factors have contributed, it [illegible] to me, to the development of this popular fervour: first of all, [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] disregard the strictly charismatic dimension of Abu Madyan, who drew such [illegible] crowd of disciples round him that, according [illegible] some chroniclers, the Almohad authorities suspected him of wanting

to raise an army by claiming the title of Mahdi; whether it is true or not, this assertion in any [illegible] exemplifies the [illegible] of popularity which Abu Madyan enjoyed in his lifetime. Moreover, contrary to what [illegible] happened to other *awliyâ'*, who also knew a certain degree of [illegible] during their [illegible] through this world but of whom no memory has conserved reminiscence nor any epitaph the name, the posthumous [illegible] of Abu Madyan has notably resisted the onslaught of time, and, [illegible] more implacable, the ungrateful memory of men. His reputation was in fact actively maintained and regularly nourished throughout the centuries, both by [illegible] strong oral tradition, particularly via [illegible] *muwashshahât* which extol his miracles and praise his virtues – one of them, recently composed by an Algerian singer, has enjoyed [illegible] great success with the Maghrebi young people – and by [illegible] wealth of more [illegible] erudite literature.

This richness of documentation [illegible] deceive us however. The texts are numerous, it is true; nevertheless, on reading them carefully, [illegible] discovers that they [illegible] saying the [illegible] thing, in [illegible] less disguised form [illegible] the case may be, so that the facts which [illegible] currently have on Abu Madyan finally do not add up to much. To the inevitable question 'who copied whom?' I shall reply without hesitation: an examination of the sources relating to the biography of Abu Madyan reveals that the *Tashawwuf* by Tadili, who [illegible] in about 627/1230, constitutes the original [illegible] from which later writers drew, adding here and there some elements of their own.

Consequently, it would be useful to recall the main points of information written down by Tadili in section 162 of this work dedicated to Abu Madyan.[2] Of the many accounts which it contains, one will remember especially the [illegible] by Muhammad b. Ibrahim al-Ansari and 'Ali al-Ghafiqi al-Sawwaf who heard from Abu Madyan, of whom they were close disciples, the story of the circumstances which surrounded the beginning of his vocation. Here [illegible] the principle points of [illegible] in the first account by M. b. Ibrahim al-Ansari: [illegible] orphan, mistreated by his older brothers whom he served as [illegible] shepherd, [illegible] young Abu Madyan suffered dreadfully from his illiteracy which made him incapable of fulfilling his obligatory acts of devotion. Having resolved to teach himself, he repeatedly tried to escape, but each time his brothers caught him and punished him severely. However, thanks to miraculous intervention which dissuaded them from keeping him any longer, [illegible] gained permission to leave.

From the village of his birth, situated [illegible] Seville, the youth arrived, after various vicissitudes, [illegible] Fez where, first of all, he learned the rudiments of the religion. Then, wanting to know more, [illegible] attended the [illegible] of [illegible] *fuqahâ'*, only to realize very quickly that [illegible] did [illegible] remember anything of what they said. Very fortunately, [illegible] [illegible] Ibn

Hirzihim – a famous *faqîh-sûfi* – whose teaching went, he said, 'straight heart'. Having people speak about Abu Ya'za, famous during his lifetime for many miracles, Abu Madyan to visit him with a group of friends. The of the story is well known; let's listen, nevertheless, to the account that Abu Madyan gave of it to disciple Muhammad al-Ansari:

> When arrived Mount Ayrujan we into Abu Ya'za's house, he welcomed everyone except When the meal was served, forbade me eat; so I went and sat down in corner of the house. It continued that for three days, each time the meal appeared, and I got up to eat, he me away; I exhausted with hunger, and I felt humiliated. After three days had gone by, Abu Ya'za left his I down in the place where been, my face. Then I raised my head and opened my eyes: I saw nothing, I had become blind. During the whole night I did not stop crying. The next morning Abu Ya'za for me said: 'Come here, Andalusian!' I close to him. He put his hand on my face, and immediately I recovered my sight. Then he massaged my chest with his hands, and said to those who present: 'This one will have a great destiny!'

Abu Ya'za then allowed Abu Madyan to go, but not without warning him first of the dangers that he would meet on the way; of course, things happened just Abu Ya'za had predicted. 'After that,' concludes Abu Madyan, 'I did not stop travelling until one day I arrived Bugia where I stayed.'[3]

The by 'Ali al-Ghafiqi is noticeably different. The childhood of the saint, which it seems fairly unhappy, is passed in silence, as the precise circumstances of his departure for the Maghreb; Abu Madyan confines himself to telling his disciple that he left his native village to go to the Maghreb. The version he gives to Ghafiqi about his stay in Fez contains more facts than that conveyed by Ansari, particularly concerning his teachers and his initiatory education. Thus he specifies that Ibn Hirzihim taught him the *Ri'âya* by Muhasibi, and the *Ihyâ' 'Ulûm al-dîn* by Ghazali, and that he studied, besides, the *Sunan* by Tirmidhi under direction of Abu-l-Hasan Ibn Ghalib, another *faqîh-sûfi*, and disciple of al-'Arif.

Abu Madyan also revealed that he initiated into the Way (*akhadhtu tarîqat al-tasawwuf 'an*) by Abu 'Abd Allah al-Daqqaq – a Sufi whom hagiographical sources[4] present us as a rather eccentric person, who walked about the streets calling out that saint – and Abu-l-Hasan al-Salawi, whom I have been unable to this day to identify.

Lastly, Ghafiqi's narration is the first give of episode of gazelle, which become legendary, which I summarize follows:

When he a student in Fez, every time had learnt a of the

Qur'an, a *hadith*, Abu Madyan used to isolate himself in a hermitage, practise this verse until he obtained the *fath*, enlightenment proper to the practice of the or in question. The place that Abu Madyan chosen for his retreat was a ruined site, in mountains, the coast. A gazelle regularly to visit him there, and, far from being afraid of him, sniffed him from head to foot, then settled down by his side. One day, however, after having smelt him in this way, the gazelle gave him a disapproving look and away; Abu Madyan then realized that the presence on his person of of money the of this unusual behaviour, and he got rid of it immediately.

The last but least piece of information to remember from the *Tashawwuf* concerns the of Abu Madyan. Curiously, Tadili is extremely concise about this: 'He was ordered', writes, 'to present himself in Marrakesh. He died the way Yassir in 594, or according to some, 588; he buried 'Ubbâd, just outside Tlemcen.'[5] A few lines further on he informs us – relying the testimony of person who present the death agony of Abu Madyan – that the saint's last words were 'Allah al-Haqq' or, according to another account, 'Allah Allah.'

Tadili's laconicism about this event, and, more precisely, about the which impelled the sultan to command Abu Madyan to present himself in Marrakesh, is, the very least, surprising. Would the author of the *Tashawwuf*, who close to several of Abu Madyan's disciples, of whom accompanied the master on his last earthly journey, have been unaware of the for this sudden and fatal the palace? It is rather unlikely; however, he keeps quiet about it.

This is a silence which is all the more striking since it with the prolixity Tadili's successors displayed on this subject which, moreover, has continued to divide them over the centuries. In fact, when draws up an inventory of their texts, and collates the accounts which they give of this tragic event, one notices that two diametrically opposed theories, each one tirelessly upheld and repeated by an almost equal number of partisans, have prevailed amongst Arab historians.

For which unfortunately they do not specify, Western specialists of Islam have always chosen to uphold the version which interprets the facts in political way, and which I summarize here, relying on the account written down by Ibn Qunfudh in his *Uns al-Faqir Wa'izz al-Haqir:*

> Following malicious denunciation, the Almohad Sultan, Ya'qub al-Mansur, ordered the governor of Bugia to have Abu Madyan brought to under escort. The announcement of this disquieting royal provoked a strong emotional reaction amongst the followers of the The latter tried to his disciples: 'Shu'ayb', he told them, 'is weak old man, incapable of walking; now, it has been decreed that his death will take place in another country.

> As it is inescapable that he should get there, God has arranged it in such a way that someone will carry him gently to the place of his burial, and transport him in the best way to his determined end. However, those who are asking for me will not see me, and I shall not see them.' Abu Madyan then left accompanied by the royal escort. Having arrived on the outskirts of Tlemcen he asked: 'What is this place, where we are now, called?' – 'Al-'Ubbad' (the devout) – 'How pleasant it would be to die here!' The saint passed away shortly afterwards.[6]

Ghubrini is the first, to my knowledge, to put forward this version in the *'Unwân al-Dirâya*,[7] which he wrote down about a century after Abu Madyan's death; he was followed by Ibn Qunfudh (d.809/1406), Ibn Maryam (d.1011/1602),[8] Ahmad Baba al-Tumbukti (d.1036/621),[9] al-Maqqari (d.1041/1631).[10] It is interesting that the first two, Ghubrini and Ibn Qunfudh, did not deem it necessary to specify the nature of the anonymous accusation made against Abu Madyan, perhaps because it was more obvious in their time, which was relatively close to the time when Abu Madyan lived.

Ibn Maryam, Maqqari and Ahmad Tumbukti, who wrote much later, felt the need to be more precise; they point out that the anonymous informer convinced Sultan Mansur that the Saint of Bugia constituted a danger to the realm, on account of his resemblance to the Mahdî, and his large number of disciples. These authors also specify that the informer was one of the *'ulama' al-zâhir*, the doctors of law.

With this classic scenario of a political conspiracy hatched by the wicked *fuqahâ'* is contrasted a somewhat romantic, and in its own way just as classic, version of the repentant sovereign who seeks the *baraka* of a *walî*. This version of events appeared, for the first time in a work which dates from the end of the seventh century, and which is therefore contemporary with the *'Unwân al-Dirâya*: the *Risâla* by Safi al-Din Ibn Mansur, edited and translated by Denis Gril.[11]

Ibn Abi Mansur lived in Egypt, where he was in close contact with the community of Maghrebi Sufis and Andalusian émigrés to the East. His *Risâla*, in which he wrote down the biographies of some 155 Sufis – about sixty of whom are natives of the Muslim West – provides precious information on the world of the Sufis in the East in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, particularly on the relationships which they had with representatives of temporal power.

It is from Shaykh Abu-l-'Abbas al-Mariyyi, a native of Almeria, that Ibn Abi Mansur obtained his knowledge about the summoning of Abu Madyan to Marrakesh. This Sufi, also known as Abu-l-'Abbas al-Qanja'iri by the compilers who mention him[12], became – at least so he says – the spiritual guide of [illegible] under the following circumstances: the sultan, Abu-l-'Abbas explains to the author of the *Risâla*, sincerely repentant of having had his brother executed after the latter had tried to overthrow him, ardently desired to find a teacher who would

pacify his soul, and bring him to eternal salvation. A lady of the Way, in whom [illegible] had confided, advised him [illegible] see Abu Madyan:

> Ya'qub then [illegible] for Shaykh Abu Madyan in such [illegible] urgent [illegible] supplicating way that the latter, who was then at Bugia, replied [illegible] his appeal by declaring: 'In obeying him, I am obeying God, Glory to Him, but I shall not reach him; I shall die at Tlemcen.' Having arrived in this town, he [illegible] to Ya'qub's messengers [illegible] were escorting him: 'Greet your master and tell him that he will find healing [illegible] the presence of Abu-l-'Abbas al-Mariyyi.' [illegible] thus that [illegible] Abû Madyan died in Tlemcen.

Ya'qub searched for Abu-l-'Abbas al-Mariyyi, [illegible] when [illegible] found, followed his teaching in conformity with the [illegible] of [illegible] Abu Madyan.

There is [illegible] hagiographical source slightly anterior [illegible] the *Tashawwuf*, which has bearing on the Sufis who lived in Fez, and therefore especially on Abu Madyan: this is the *Mustafâd fî Dhikr al-'Ubbâd bi Madînat Fâs* . . . by Muhammad b. Qasim al-Tamimi, an important part of which [illegible] recently been discovered in Morocco.

The author,[13] who [illegible] [illegible] the dawn of the seventh century, [illegible] ingly wandered among the Sufi circles of the West – and also those of the East where he stayed for fifteen years – to gather the *baraka* of the [illegible] and glean their history. *Muhaddith* when [illegible] liked, he [illegible] also [illegible] spiritual teacher. [illegible] [illegible] notably a teacher of Ibn 'Arabi, whom he invested with the *khirqa* in [illegible] in Fez. In his youth [illegible] was close to Abu Ya'za and Abu Madyan. His account is therefore very precious, and its publication, which Ahmed Toufiq and Muhammad [illegible] Sharifa have prepared, and who have permitted me [illegible] consult it, will no doubt allow the breaches, which fractured our knowledge of the world of Maghrebi religious [illegible] [illegible] the fifth and sixth centuries of the Hegira, to be partially [illegible] in. [illegible] is necessary [illegible] recognize, however, that it is quite deceptive as far as Abu Madyan is concerned: apart from some vague details on his early life and on the organization of his teaching [illegible] Fez, [illegible] does not [illegible] much to the little we know of his personality and his spiritual history.

Although it is cited by Ibn 'Arabi and [illegible] later authors, the *Mustafâd* has obviously [illegible] benefited from as wide [illegible] diffusion as [illegible] compilation by Tadili, to whom [illegible] owes, [illegible] [illegible] have seen, the first organized [illegible] of Abu Madyan's life. His example, unfortunately, [illegible] not inspired anyone to emulate him.

[illegible] Qunfudh, who [illegible] [illegible] the beginning of the ninth century, does indeed present us with [illegible] monograph entirely devoted to the illustrious Maghrebi Sufi. However the *Uns al-faqîr*, of which he is the author, was never, [illegible] things considered, any [illegible] than a long list of Abu Madyan's

teachers, his companions and his contemporaries. Ibn Qunfudh tells nothing about the leading which Tadili not already said.

In the work of other compilers such as Marrakushi, Badisi, Shattanawfi, Yafi'i, authors of the eighth century, or even Ibn Maryam, Ibn Qadi, Maqqari, etc. who were much later, the quest turns out be equally fruitless, although they do provide two pieces of information which do not appear in Tamimi nor in Tadili. But these not, for this very reason, subject to doubt? One concerns Abu Madyan's journey to during course of which he would, they say, have 'Abd al-Qadir al-Jilani and Ahmad Rifa'i. The other, which I mentioned just now, the why Sultan Al-Mansur summoned Abu Madyan to Marrakesh. Apart from that, they only repeat, more less slavishly the may be, the section from the *Tashawwuf*, adding here there some unedited aphorisms of the saint mixed with edifying anecdotes which sometimes completely improbable; (I am thinking in particular of story, told by an Egyptian writer who died the beginning of the ninth century, Al-Hurayfshi, according to which Abu Madyan suddenly and miraculously converted seventy-two Christian monks, and this all happened Andalusia, even though the facts would indicate that he did not leave the Maghreb again after the day when, as youth, he fled there from his native Andalusian village).[14]

Ghubrini, and later Munawi, it is true, more about this. That is because, readers of Ibn 'Arabi, they have copied and often truncated whole from the *Futûhât* which they have not always understood.

Ultimately, the long account in *Tashawwuf* constitutes, therefore, the original, and, to speak, embryonic version of Abu Madyan's biography. Now, from picture painted by Tadili, what do we know finally about the itinerary of Abu Madyan, about his interior journey, his experience of the one God, about the *murîd* and then the *murshîd* that he was? What do know about his doctrinal teaching, his *ahwâl* his *maqamât*? Absolutely nothing. Only writer provides answers these questions: the author of the *Futûhât*.

One still has them; scattered, the mercy of the inspiration which guided pen of the Doctor Maximus, thousands of hidden between the lines, they do not present themselves to the glance of the hurried reader. Only a careful and searching examination of the akbarian text can unmask them. Having accomplished this tracking-down exercise, the hardest work remains be done. For it is still necessary to decipher the often obscure formulations, where Abu Madyan's fleetingly appears, to journey through the akbarian corpus piece together, then finally patiently the mosaic. A labour of love, is true, but one end of which the

satisfaction of seeing the subtle and astonishing aspects of Abu Madyan's spirituality appear.

One would search in vain elsewhere for such an insight into interior experience, since his biographers, despite not held in doubt, not know how to capture anything but the external face of his sainthood. As recorders, faithful if possible, of his words deeds, their task necessarily limited to that; it to the Shaykh al-Akbar be his *tarjumân*, his interpreter.

The author of the *Futûhât* has not, moreover, neglected study the famous sayings of the Saint of Bugia. refers them his writings when the occasion arises, and the commentary which gives on – be it explicitly or implicitly – sheds, time, new light on the often sibylline words of Abu Madyan.

It sometimes happens – but it happens often in Shaykh al-Akbar's work for one to be surpised – that his interpretation differs from one chapter to the next, from one context to another, but without his contradicting himself nevertheless. Such is the case, for example, with this well-known saying of Abu Madyan's: 'We don't tainted meat, give us fresh meat.' In chapter 54 of the *Futûhât* (I, 280) Ibn 'Arabi in it illustration of the opposition between perfidious of knowledge such as it is conceived by the *fuqahâ'*, who extract it from books and from the dead, and that of the saints, who gain it from its very source, the Living God. Whilst elsewhere, in chapter 216 (*Fut* II, 505) explains that, by these words, Abu Madyan requested his disciples only to elicit the *futûh*, the interior illuminations which they themselves experienced, and to refrain from commenting on those of others.

Too loyal to be servile, the Shaykh al-Akbar does not hesitate when the occasion arises to criticize such and such an aphorism of the master whom he reveres; thus, on quoting in the *Futûhât* (IV, 264) saying of Abu Madyan's – which describes straight away as simple and general saying (*qawl ummî 'âmmî*) – on the secret of the life which flows in everything, he pronounces it inaccurate without being, specifies, completely wrong, and he with regard this that the Saint of Bugia received the *futûh al-'ibâra*, charisma of expression which, points elsewhere (*Fut* II, 506), is only given the perfect Muhammadian, if he is in other respects the heir of another prophet.

The Shaykh al-Akbar is not either of the extraordinary which marked Abu Madyan's vocation; however, as he them, he simultaneously gives an explanation of their prodigious Such is the case with that strange and famous episode – which the hagiographers have all carefully recorded, but the enigma of which none of them elucidates – during which Abu Madyan suddenly lost his sight

on [redacted] of Abu Ya'za, and recovered it [redacted] little later, thanks [redacted] him; [redacted] was, Ibn 'Arabi points out (*Fut* II, 51), because he [redacted] of the *mûsâwî* spiritual type, like Moses, and it was because his face emitted an absolutely dazzling light, in the manner of the prophet Moses, that Abu Ya'za sometimes struck down his visitors [redacted] by lightning.

What fundamentally distinguishes [redacted] 'Arabi's approach from that of others is that he has penetrated the [redacted] of the spiritual [redacted] with which Abu Madyan [redacted] endowed, the states, *ahwâl*, [redacted] he travelled through, the stations, *maqâmât*, that he conquered, the [redacted] [redacted] the knowledges that [redacted] received. At no time, however, does Ibn 'Arabi give us a complete, finished portrait of Abu Madyan's *walâya*. More often, they are only brief but incisive and penetrating comments, a little like [redacted] stippled design which it will be for us to recreate.

He notes, for example, in [redacted] [redacted] of the *Futûhât* (IV, 141) that Abu Madyan's [redacted] corresponded to the first two words of the verse '*qul Allâh thumma dharhum fî khawdihim yal'abûn*'; the second [redacted] of this [redacted] implies in fact [redacted] affirmation of the multiplicity which is incompatible with the state of *fanâ'*, extinction in the divine Uniqueness, in which, [redacted] states elsewhere (*Fut* II, 201) Abu Madyan dwelt. Another time he points [redacted] in passing (*Fut* II, 252) that [redacted] *rujû'* of Abu Madyan, his [redacted] [redacted] the creatures, [redacted] *ikhtiyârî*, freely desired by him, which [redacted] Michel Valsan emphasized,[15] is, from [redacted] certain point of view, more exceptional than the *rujû' idtirâran*, which is accomplished under constraint, owing to the sacrificial nature of this voluntary 'descent'.

With [redacted] little persistence one can thus extract from the akbarian corpus, and above all from the *Futûhât*, [redacted] pieces of information, [redacted] brief [redacted] they [redacted] precious, on the realization in Abu Madyan, of moral [redacted] titude (*wara'*), abandonment to God (*tawakkul*), heroic generosity (*futuwwa*), etc. Formulated with [redacted] [redacted] and [redacted] precision which do not [redacted] to surprise, these observations [redacted] remarkable in that, as succinct [redacted] they are, they throw into relief the fundamental [redacted] often unsuspected characteristics of Abu Madyan's spirituality.

I should like to cite two [redacted] very revealing examples of the prodigiously keen perception which Ibn 'Arabi had of Abu Madyan's spiritual state. The first relates to the unusual bond which existed between Abu Madyan and one of his children, which is referred to in [redacted] tion 164 of the *Tashawwuf* dedicated to 'Abd al-Razzaq Jazuli. Abu Madyan, Tadili recounts, had, in accordance with a prediction by Abu Ya'za, a son by [redacted] black slave from whom he later wished to part. Fearing for the future of the child and his mother, he hesitated to do this, when, [redacted] help him out of difficulty, 'Abd al-Razzaq Jazuli volunteered [redacted] marry [redacted] mother and bring up the child. The latter, [redacted] the author of [redacted] *Tashawwuf*, displayed gifts of *firâsa*, supernatural perception, from the [redacted] [redacted] Unfortunately he did not live long. Neither Tadili nor

any of his [illegible] give any more information [illegible] the [illegible] [illegible] of the exceptional and precocious power of this child.

Now, in chapter 35 of the *Futûhât*, which deals with 'the knowledge of [illegible] who [illegible] realized the dwelling-place of the Breath [illegible] its [illegible] after [illegible] death', [illegible] chapter which is indissociable from [illegible] one which precedes it and which also deals with this matter, Ibn 'Arabi is quite loquacious on this subject. Every spiritual man, he explains [illegible] [illegible] length, inevitably receives from God the faculty of perceiving through a single [illegible] of his five [illegible] the totality of [illegible] the ordinary man [illegible] only apprehend by using the specialized sense which corresponds [illegible] the nature of [illegible] apprehended object. So that one would [illegible] of such and such [illegible] *walî* that he is, for example, *sâhib* [illegible] gifted with looking, or [illegible] *sâhib sam'*, gifted with hearing: which means that, by looking alone in the first case, by hearing alone in the second, he apprehends what, in the individual [illegible] endowed with this charisma, is perceived by means of taste, touch, smell: he 'sees' the scent of the flowers, he 'hears' the taste of [illegible] fruit. What is more, such [illegible] being, [illegible] the author of the *Futûhât*, can, if the occasion arises, become in his [illegible] [illegible] instrument of perception for others. That is exactly what, according to him, happened between Abu Madyan and his young son. [illegible] writes (*Fut* II, 221):

> Abu Madyan, who was *sâhib nazar*, had [illegible] son by [illegible] black woman who at the age of seven, was able to say [illegible] looking [illegible] the sea: 'At such and such [illegible] spot [illegible] such [illegible] such a boat carrying such and such goods.' Several days later, when the boat berthed at Bugia – where the child lived – one could ascertain that he had seen correctly. When he [illegible] asked how he saw that, he replied at first: 'Through my eyes.' Then: 'No, through my heart.' And finally he declared: 'No, I only [illegible] that through my father; when he is present, and I [illegible] looking [illegible] him, I can [illegible] these things which I tell you about; but when he is absent, I cannot [illegible] anything.' Thus, [illegible] saw 'through [illegible] father' [illegible] the ordinary [illegible] [illegible] 'through his eyes' in a mirror.

Let us note in passing that Ibn 'Arabi also quotes with regard to this the famous *hadîth qudsî*, [illegible] often commented on by him: 'When I love him, I am his hearing by which [illegible] hears, his sight by which he [illegible] his hand by which he takes hold, his foot with which [illegible] walks . . .' which gives an indication of the relationship between this charisma, and the degree of spiritual realization of which he is the symbol and the result.

The second [illegible] which I have chosen [illegible] from chapter 24 of the *Futûhât* (I, 284): Abu Madyan, writes the Shaykh al-Akbar, who was known in the higher world under the [illegible] of Abu-l-Naja, [illegible] one of those who have attained the *maqâm* [illegible] *malik al-mulk*. [illegible] loved [illegible] say 'my *sûrah* is *Tabâraka alladhî biyadihi-l mulk* . . . That [illegible] why I have affirmed with regard to him that [illegible] was one of the two imams, for that is the *maqâm* of the *imâmat*.'

What Ibn 'Arabi does [illegible] make clear here is that it is a question, in this case, of the *imâmat* of the Left; [illegible] function which, [illegible] points [illegible] in another work, the *Manzil al-Qutb*,[16] Abu Madyan assumed for [illegible] exceptionally long time, [illegible] which he gave up [illegible] or two hours before his death in order to receive the *qutbiyya*, the function of Pole. This [illegible] piece of information was communicated to him, [illegible] in the *Mawâqi' al-Nujûm*, by Abu Yazid al-Bistami during a vision. I think moreover that this [illegible] from the *Mawâqi'* (Cairo ed., 1965, p.139), the interpretation of which [illegible] distorted in the course of time by less scrupulous writers, is the origin of [illegible] legend, which certain later compilers such [illegible] Ibn Maryam repeated, according to which Abu Yazid al-Bistami expressly announced the coming of Abu Madyan.

That Abu Madyan acceded to the dignity of Pole on the threshold of death seems [illegible] first sight [illegible] contradict another [illegible] of the *Manzil al-Qutb* (p. 4) in which, after having explained that with the exception of men and the *jinn* all the creatures know the identity of the Pole, and make a pact with him, Ibn 'Arabi recounts [illegible] strange story which happened [illegible] one of Abu Madyan's disciples, [illegible] al-Sadrani:

> Having arrived [illegible] Mount Qâf, which according to tradition surrounds [illegible] universe, he met the serpent who himself encircled the mountain. After the customary greetings, an astonishing dialogue started up between them: 'How is Shaykh Abu Madyan?' asks the serpent of the traveller. 'I left him in good health, but how do you know him?' – 'Is there [illegible] single being, [illegible] the face of the earth', replies [illegible] astonished serpent, 'who does not know him or love him? Since God put his name on earth, there is not one amongst us who [illegible] [illegible] know him.'

One would be tempted to deduce from what the serpent said that [illegible] the time that this meeting took place, which would be in 586/1190 [illegible] the latest when Ibn 'Arabi heard it told by one of his teachers, Abu Madyan [illegible] the Pole, although his death came several years later, in about 589 [illegible] the earliest [illegible] 594 at the latest. However, the last line of this [illegible] dispels all ambiguity in my opinion: 'Such is the *maqâm* of the well-beloved (*mahbûb*)! What would [illegible] say, then, of that of the Pole!' exclaims Ibn 'Arabi. I should point out in passing that Munawi (*Kawâkib*, undated, Cairo, II, p. 83) and Sha'rani (*Tabaqât*, Cairo, 1954, I, p.154) have recorded this story – which also [illegible] in the *Futûhât* (II, 682–3) – but have shortened it in such a way that in their version of the facts it is Ibn 'Arabi who [illegible] the conversation with the serpent of Qâf. Moreover, in the text of the *Futûhât* which relates to this meeting, the Shaykh al-Akbar quotes a response by Musa al-Sadrani [illegible] the serpent's speech which is worth thinking about: 'By God', he said of Abu Madyan, 'I know people who would like to [illegible] him because they [illegible] ignorant about him and hate him.' A remark which would tend [illegible] give

justification [redacted] those writers who maintain that Abu Madyan [redacted] summoned [redacted] the royal palace following a denunciation.

The singularly penetrating vision [redacted] Ibn 'Arabi [redacted] of Abu Madyan's spirituality, and the precision of [redacted] observations, do [redacted] prise one inordinately when [redacted] knows that [redacted] only expresses himself with the authority and unshakeable certitude which *dhawq*, spiritual experience, confers on him, because, as [redacted] himself declares, he [redacted] describes anything which he himself [redacted] not 'tasted'. [redacted] if that explains and justifies the peremptory tone which he [redacted] when [redacted] describes [redacted] interior experience of Abu Madyan, that does [redacted] tell us [redacted] [redacted] for his marked preference for [redacted] teacher whom [redacted] has never [redacted] except, I [redacted] remind you, in [redacted] *barzakh*, the imaginal world. Which of Ibn 'Arabi's readers has [redacted] [redacted] fact [redacted] struck by the frequent repetition of Abu Madyan's name in the akbarian writings, and [redacted] particularly in the *Futûhât*? As [redacted] [redacted] of fact, [redacted] quick check which I indulged in revealed that of all the [redacted] of the Way, Abu Madyan is the one to whom Ibn 'Arabi most often refers in this work.

It is in Ibn 'Arabi's history, in the story of his quest and his spiritual destiny, [redacted] [redacted] is necessary, I think, [redacted] look for the origin of this profound reverence which Ibn 'Arabi has for the Saint of Bugia. When Ibn 'Arabi began, [redacted] about the [redacted] of fifteen, on the long path which would lead him to the pinnacle of sainthood, he began the journey alone, with the blessing, it is true, that certain prophets gave him, but without [redacted] terrestrial guide giving him assistance; besides, [redacted] [redacted] not know any [redacted] that time, he states in the *Futûhât* (II, 548). Later however, about five years after his conversion *stricto sensu*, he would be helped in his enterprise by [redacted] large number of spiritual masters. He [redacted] the first [redacted] naturally in the place where he lived, that is [redacted] Seville. These [redacted] Abu-l 'Abbas al-'Uryabi, an illiterate peasant who was, he [redacted] in the [redacted] (section 1), the first to give him any doctrinal teaching; Musa al-Mirtuli (section 8), an occasional poet, who urged him towards asceticism; Muhammad b. Qassum (section 7), [redacted] *faqîh-Sûfî* who taught him the *muhâsabat al-nafs*, and all the rules relative to the observance of religious worship.

Through their advice and their *baraka*, these men, and others whom I will not mention here, enabled the young Ibn 'Arabi to avoid the dangerous reefs [redacted] which very often the *himma* of the *murids* founders, and by that, they have contributed to the success of his enterprise. None of them, nevertheless, inculcated in him the rules of the *riyâda*, the initiatory discipline; it [redacted] to [redacted] disciple of Abu Madyan, Shaykh Yusuf al-Kumi, that this responsibility and privilege fell. It is interesting to [redacted] that he [redacted] him in 586, [redacted] decisive year in his destiny, during the [redacted] of which notably the Great Vision of Cordova happened, by which, according to [redacted] disciples, [redacted] learnt from the prophets who came to [redacted]

him that he had been chosen [redacted] be the Seal of the Saints.

Was it by chance [redacted] that same year [redacted] considerable change take place in [redacted] spiritual direction? Until then, those who took him [redacted] all attached by their origins and education to the more specifically Andalusian [redacted] of the *tasawwuf* of the Muslim West – of which the school of Almería shows the [redacted] representative, but not unique, trend. Now, after 586, Ibn 'Arabi [redacted] under, [redacted] it were, a Maghrebi spiritual jurisdiction, and more precisely, under that of Abu Madyan through the intermediary of several of his Andalusian and Maghrebi disciples. However, if one considers [redacted] from the [redacted] Ibn 'Arabi's vocation had been placed under the supervision of the *afrâd*, a spiritual category of saints to which, we shall soon see, Abu Madyan belonged, the intervention of the latter in the destiny of the Shaykh al-Akbar seems like a continuation rather than a breaking off.

However that may be, it was from 586 onwards that Ibn 'Arabi associated with several teachers of the spiritual line of Abu Madyan, amongst whom [redacted] Shaykh Yusuf al-Kumi who played [redacted] double role in his journey: he was, on the one hand, the only one, Ibn 'Arabi points out (*Fut* I, 616), who inculcated in him the initiatory discipline, *riyâda*; he [redacted] also the first to initiate him into the works of [redacted] *tasawwuf*, in particular making him discover the *Risâla* by Qushayri. With regard to this, Ibn 'Arabi acknowledges in the *Rûh* (section 2) that at that time – I would remind you that this happened more than ten years after his 'conversion', and that he [redacted] then twenty-six years old – [redacted] had still not read any treatises of the *tasawwuf*, not even knowing that there were any. And in addition, and this is [redacted] least [redacted] important, Shaykh al-Kumi was to share with his young pupil his intense devotion for Abu Madyan whose virtues and *karamât* he never tired of recounting. Ibn 'Arabi would [redacted] have only [redacted] desire: to [redacted] the Saint of Bugia. One evening when [redacted] [redacted] absorbed by this thought, [redacted] al-Sadrani, who spoke with the serpent of Qâf, arrived [redacted] his house in Seville carrying a [redacted] from Abu Madyan, which told him that his wish would [redacted] [redacted] granted in this world, but that they would however [redacted] in spirit (*Rûh*, section 19).

Three years later, in 589/1193, Ibn 'Arabi embarked for the Maghreb with the specific intention of going to Tunis [redacted] meet one of Abu Madyan's [redacted] famous disciples, 'Abd al-'Aziz Mahdawi. The [redacted] in the [redacted] tells [redacted] of the sudden [redacted] of this decision;[17] it also raises a problem to which I should now like to draw attention: [redacted] dispute divides historians of the Arabic-speaking world [redacted] the date of Abu Madyan's death. Many situate it [redacted] 594, and this is the date which Arabists have generally upheld although many chroniclers, particularly Ghubrini [redacted] Yafi'i, situate it in about 590. I would remind you that Ibn 'Arabi himself gives the date of [redacted] in his *Futûhât* (IV, 195). Now, from Ceuta where Ibn 'Arabi disembarked in 589, to Tunis where he arrived in 590,

the road [redacted] through Bugia which Abu Madyan did [redacted] leave for the last years of his life. If one allows [redacted] the latter lived until 594, it [redacted] [redacted] hardly conceivable that Ibn 'Arabi, whose dearest wish, as [redacted] have seen, [redacted] to [redacted] Abu Madyan, would not have visited him [redacted] that time, or even in the following years during which he continued to wander through the Maghreb. However, [redacted] know that this meeting did not take place. The only explanation, to my mind, is that Abu Madyan had passed away before Ibn 'Arabi's arrival in Bugia in 589–90; I [redacted] even inclined [redacted] think [redacted] Abu Madyan's death, whatever the circumstances may have been, was [redacted] [redacted] to Ibn 'Arabi's sudden decision to embark for the Maghreb. It is again interesting to note on this subject, that at the time of this journey to Tunisia in 590, Ibn 'Arabi stopped – either on the way [redacted] on the way back – [redacted] Tlemcen (*Futûhat* I, 379 and IV, 498); might it not have been on this occasion that he made the pilgrimage to Abu Madyan's tomb, situated [redacted] far from the town, that he briefly makes mention of in the *Muhâdarât*?[18]

Be that as it may, an event took place during the course of his stay [redacted] Tlemcen which completely sums up the very strong attachment which [redacted] [redacted] for Abu Madyan: having observed [redacted] certain reticence towards Abu Madyan in one of the people he [redacted] discourse with, [redacted] 'Arabi began to detest this man. It required the intervention of the Prophet, who reminded him [redacted] a vision that it [redacted] necessary to judge [redacted] individual less on his feelings towards Abu Madyan, than on the love which he bore the Envoy, for Ibn 'Arabi to become aware of the deviation into which his excessive veneration [redacted] led him (*Fut* IV, 498).

One year after his long stay in Tunis in the company of Mahdawi, who in particular introduced him to Ibn Barrajan's *Hikam*, Ibn 'Arabi again [redacted] [redacted] the Maghreb. But this time [redacted] went to Fez. There he formed [redacted] friendship with another intimate of Abu Madyan, Muhammad b. Qasim Tamimi, the author, as [redacted] have seen, of the *Mustafâd*. From him Ibn 'Arabi obtained information – about Abu Madyan, certainly, but also about [redacted] whole generation of Sufis whom he did not know, and who [redacted] here and there in his work.

Other teachers whom Ibn 'Arabi met later [redacted] also played [redacted] intermediary rôle between Abu Madyan and him: in particular Ibn Saydabun with whom he kept company in Murcia, and Ayyub al-Fihri of Ceuta, and also 'Abd Allah al-Mawruri, for whom he wrote the *Tadbîrât Ilâhiyya*. This disciple of Abu Madyan, of whom I have not yet found [redacted] trace in any compilation – (except perhaps a mention in the *Dhayl*[19] by Marrakushi, but this is [redacted] brief and imprecise to allow [redacted] [redacted] ascertain categorically whether it relates to the [redacted] person) – [redacted] several times, especially in the *Muhâdarât al-Abrâr*, always in relation [redacted] Abu Madyan. He is the one, in fact, who told Ibn 'Arabi the story of [redacted] [redacted] visions which one of Abu Madyan's companions – whose

name has never been revealed to us – is supposed to have had, in which master would appear to him sitting in the midst of gathering of illustrious Sufis, replying each time to subtle question which these colleagues would humbly him about *tawhîd*, for example, about *ma'rifa*. I have counted fifteen narratives of this type in the *Muhâdarât* that correspond to fifteen visions which only differ from one another in the question raised. One of these narratives, relating to the question *mâ sirru hayâtika*, is be found in the section of the *Tashawwuf* dedicated Abu Madyan; Tadili recounts it following Ansari, a long-time companion of Abu Madyan who told him this story which happened to man whose name he does mention. Moreover, the tale appears in the *Bahjat al-Asrâr*[20] with the difference that Shattanawfi identifies visionary a certain Abu 'Abd Allah Muhammad al-Ghazzali al-Maghribi.

What is interesting is that Shattanawfi also attributes other visions of a radically different nature to this person. One of them, however, its equivalent in the *Futûhât* (I, 666), where Ibn 'Arabi recounts, according to Mawruri again, that man – Ibn 'Arabi states that he remembers who he is, but curiously does not name him – saw Iblis in dream, and asked him how his relationship with Abu Madyan was; 'Nothing resembles me more', replied, 'when I throw something into the heart of Abu Madyan, than a who urinates in the ocean.'

For my part, I help wondering about the authenticity of these fifteen visions recorded by Ibn 'Arabi. Did they all happen to this anonymous companion of Abu Madyan? I doubt it. Of the extensive akbarian corpus, the *Kitâb Muhâdarât al-Abrâr* is without doubt the least esoteric of Ibn 'Arabi's writings, and for good according to the author himself, it conceived book of *adab*, instructive, erudite and pleasing, and consequently destined for a relatively wide readership of educated people. At no time does Ibn 'Arabi involve himself with explicit and searching doctrinal concerns; he prefers, for obvious pedagogical reasons, to refer matters to the *akhbâr* of distinguished people of the Islamic and even anti-Islamic tradition, which allows him to convey message of wisdom to the reader without discouraging him. The only passages where subtle metaphysical questions developed are precisely in those discourses attributed Abu Madyan. I also have the feeling that Ibn 'Arabi, having heard about or several of these visions, used the scenario again to put forward some doctrinal ideas which, if they were in conformity with the spirit of Abu Madyan's teaching, necessarily a literal transcription of visionary dialogues.

When I working the Shaykh al-Akbar's biography, I was not so much struck as intrigued by the discreet but persistent presence of Abu Madyan in Ibn 'Arabi's life and work. Certainly, Ibn 'Arabi's

association with a number of his disciples indisputably contributed to bringing him close to Abu Madyan. These human factors, however, cannot alone explain the kind of spiritual intimacy which bound the two men together, and without which Ibn 'Arabi would never have been able to accomplish what he did for Abu Madyan – his *tarjumân*, his interpreter. I think I have found the explanation for this subtle companionship in chapter 270 of the *Futûhât*, dedicated to the Pole and the two Imams, where Ibn 'Arabi recounts the conversation he had in the *barzakh* with the Imam of the Left:

> This Imam has overwhelmed me by telling me the good news about my state which I was unaware of, even though it was my state that was in question, and he informed me about it. He forbade me besides to affiliate myself to those whom I kept company with, and told me 'Affiliate yourself only to God, for each of those whom you have met have authority over you. He is God Himself who in His bounty has taken you into His care; mention if you like the virtues of those whom you meet, but do not affiliate yourself to them, affiliate yourself to God.' The station of this Imam was equivalent to mine, for none of those whom he had met had authority over him. That is what some trustworthy people have told me and he himself informed me of it at the time of our meeting in the *barzakh*.

There is no doubt, as far as I am concerned, that the person who had the function of the Imam of the Left at the time of this encounter was none other than Abu Madyan. The content of the advice given to Ibn 'Arabi allows one, in fact, to situate this encounter at the beginning of his vocation, at the time when he kept company with many teachers. Moreover, as I have already pointed out, Ibn 'Arabi states on several occasions that Abu Madyan was the Imam of the Left, and occupied this position during a long period of his life. Finally, it is made obvious in this text that Ibn 'Arabi never met this Imam except in a subtle form, which is precisely the one in his relations with Abu Madyan.

To grasp exactly what the Imam of the Left's advice is suggesting, it is necessary to be aware of certain facts which relate to the initiatory hierarchy as Ibn 'Arabi defines it at the beginning of the second volume of the *Futûhât*.

At the top of the scale are the four Pillars, *awtâd*, with the Pole first of all, followed by the Imam of the Left, then the Imam of the Right, and finally the fourth Pillar. The real holders of these functions are the four prophets that Islamic tradition deems forever living: Idris, Jesus, Elijah and Khidr. However, each of these bearers has a substitute amongst men who fulfils his function by proxy. The *awtâd*, whether it is a question of the bearers *stricto sensu*, or of their substitutes, belong to the spiritual category of the *afrâd*, the 'Singular Men', who, Ibn 'Arabi writes, 'have for homologues amongst the angels the *muhayyamûn*, the spirits lost in love in the Divine Majesty . . . Their

station is between that of the *siddîqiyya* and that of the legislating prophecy . . . It is the station of free prophecy.'

Also, when Ibn 'Arabi declares that the [redacted] of this Imam of the Left was identical with his [redacted] 'because none of those whom he had [redacted] authority [redacted] him,' [redacted] is making an allusion, evidently, [redacted] their common belonging to the category of the *afrâd*; it is [redacted] probable that the good news which the Imam – that is, Abu Madyan, it [redacted] to [redacted] – tells him, is about this matter, which explains the insistent injunction [redacted] to pledge obedience [redacted] any human master.

What Abu Madyan and Ibn 'Arabi have in common, therefore, if my interpretation of the texts is correct, is that they both belong to the category of the *afrâd*, and are consequently not attached to any shaykh in an exclusive manner. A [redacted] which they share with many other *awliyâ'*, it is true. But what is more extraordinary, on the other hand, is that both played [redacted] posthumous role which is similar in many respects.

When one examines the *silsilas*, one may indeed ascertain that Abu Madyan appears in [redacted] number of them (as also does Ibn 'Arabi), particularly in those of the many branches of the *Shadhiliyya* and the *Qâdiriyya*. But, like the Shaykh al-Akbar, he is not the originator of any autonomous *tarîqa*. For [redacted] of spiritual expediency, linked no doubt with the necessity of restoring and preserving the Islamic inheritance in all its diverse forms at the approach of the end of time, their *râhâniya* [redacted] dedicated [redacted] penetrating many spiritual lines, and implanting their seed, but not generating any of their own.

Finally, Ibn 'Arabi and Abu Madyan have in common the fact that their teaching enjoyed an extremely wide diffusion, both in the West and in the East. In Ibn 'Arabi's case, it [redacted] his writing which was to transport his doctrine and carry the torch through time [redacted] space. In Abu Madyan's case, it was his [redacted] disciples [redacted] of whom emigrated [redacted] the East – to Egypt mainly, but also to Syria and [redacted] far as the Yemen – who would propagate his teaching, and make him play [redacted] decisive rôle in the evolution of Sufism from the seventh century of the *Hegira* onwards. Lastly, and this is not the least important point, Abu Madyan's teaching, like that of Ibn 'Arabi, was not only [redacted] reach [redacted] [redacted] of scholarly Sufi, it would also spread to the general public of the Muslim world. What distinguishes them, is that Ibn 'Arabi's doctrine has been the object of enough studies for it to [redacted] divulged, and consequently for his place and his rôle in the development of the *tasawwuf* to be roughly evaluated. Abu Madyan's teaching on the other hand, which the few writings which he has left will allow us to broach, [redacted] least in part, has not to this day prompted any study [redacted] any analysis rigorous enough to do justice to this elevated and enigmatic figure of Western Sufism.

NOTES

1. Ibn Jubayr, *Rihla*, trans. Gaudeffroy-Demombynes, Voyages, Paris, 1953–6.
2. Tadili, *Tashawwuf*, ed. A. Tawfiq, Rabat, 1984, pp. 319–26.
3. *Tashawwuf*, pp. 320–1.
4. On Daqqaq see for example section 41 of the *Tashawwuf*.
5. *Tashawwuf*, p. 319.
6. Ibn Qunfudh, *Uns al-Faqîr*, Rabat, 1965, p. 16.
7. Ghubrini, *'Unwân al-Dirâya*, Algiers, 1970, p. [illegible] sq.
8. Ibn Maryam, [illegible] *al-'Ârifin*, ed. [illegible] Cheneb, Algiers, 1908, pp. 108–15.
9. A. Baba, *Nayl al-Ibtihâj*, in the margin of [illegible] *Dîbâj*, Beirut, undated, p. 127.
10. Maqqari, *Nafh al-Tîb*, ed. Beirut, 1986, IX, pp. 369–75.
11. Ibn Abi Mansur, *Risâla*, ed. D. Gril, IFAO, 1986, pp. 151–2.
12. [illegible] Marrakushi, *al-Dhayl wa-l-Takmila*, Beirut, undated, vol. 1, pp. 46–58.
13. On Tamimi [illegible] Ibn 'Arabi, *Futûhât*, I, 244, IV, 503 [illegible] 549, as [illegible] Marrakushi, *Dhayl*, [illegible] edn, Rabat, vol. 8, section 136, pp. 352–6.
14. Ahmad al Sawma'i, *Kitâb al-Ma'zâ*, edition established by 'Ali al-Jawi in [illegible] framework of his Higher History Diploma granted [illegible] Rabat, 1989 p. 136.
15. [illegible] his translation of Ch.45 in *Etudes trad.*, April–May 1953, p. 134.
16. *Manzil al-Qutb*, in *Rasâ'il*, Hyderabad, 1948, pp. 11–12.
17. On this question see our *Ibn 'Arabi ou la quête du Soufre Rouge*, Ch.V.
18. *Muhâdarât al-Abrâr*, Cairo, 1906, II, p. 68.
19. *Dhayl*, vol. 8, note 200, p. 414.
20. *Bahjat al-Asrâr*, Cairo edition, 1330AH, p. [illegible]

Ibn al-'Arabi – Poet of Divine Realities

RALPH AUSTIN

Muhyiddin Ibn al-'Arabi was [redacted] only the greatest exponent of Sufi doctrine, but also perhaps one of the greatest exponents of esoteric religion [redacted] the whole history of human spirituality.

My purpose in this paper is, primarily, [redacted] describe and explore some aspects of a work of the Shaykh al-Akbar which is [redacted] and the same time very little known and studied, and yet without any doubt one of the most interesting, revealing and very significant of his major works. This work – his greatest collection of mystical poetry, entitled *Dîwân al-Shaykh al-Akbar* or *Al-Dîwân al-Kabîr* (the great *Dîwân*) – [redacted] not been properly edited or studied and, apart from several manuscripts of the work, mostly in Turkish libraries, it is [redacted] present available only in the Cairo printing of 1271/1855, and the reprint of that printing in Baghdad in 1963.

Of the manuscript copies of the work, [redacted] least [redacted] is an autograph, and [redacted] formed part of the private library of his celebrated disciple, Sadr al-Din al-Qunawi. However, Osman Yahya, in his invaluable two-volume bibliographical study of the works of Ibn al-'Arabi, mentions that all the manuscripts are incomplete in various ways, and that any serious study of the text for the purpose of producing a critical edition will necessitate the examination of [redacted] existing manuscripts.[1]

One may have [redacted] idea of the importance and potential of this work for the future study of Ibn al-'Arabi's thought from the fact that it [redacted] sists of some 475 [redacted] of small print which comprise well over 900 [redacted] of varying length, some only [redacted] few lines, others over [redacted] hundred, which add up [redacted] about 9,000 [redacted] of mystical verse. Thus it is not difficult to guess the enormous task which lies before the scholars whose energies and efforts will be stretched to the limit in preparing this material for [redacted] wider audience. There is no doubt whatever that this major poetical work of the Master deserves to take its place beside the much better known, and [redacted] increasingly studied, *Fusûs al-Hikam*,[2] and the monumental *Futûhât al-Makkiyyah*,[3] which [redacted] recently been the subject of [redacted] important and major study by Dr William Chittick.[4]

Before proceeding [redacted] a more extensive description and exploration of [redacted] fascinating work, I think it is as well to pause here [redacted] consider how much the unfolding [redacted] of the *Dîwân* will help [redacted] correct what [redacted] so far been [redacted] rather lopsided picture of the mystical expression of Ibn al-'Arabi.

Up till now the overwhelming impression of the written work of the Shaykh, especially in translation, has been of a massive prose exposition of the teachings of Sufism. This view has undoubtedly been very much influenced by the formidable presence in the corpus of his works of the already-mentioned encyclopaedic *Futûhât*. It is true that we have had Nicholson's excellent edition and translation of his very special small collection of poetry, the *Tarjumân al-Ashwâq*,[3] written in the old classical style, but this has seemed rather the exception which proves the rule. Another reason for this impression has been the inevitable comparisons which have been made between Ibn al-'Arabi and the more celebrated poetic exponents of Sufi experience, such as the wonderful Rumi or the Arab contemporary of the Shaykh, 'Umar b. al-Farid. Indeed, people have generally thought of the Persian Sufis as the main exponents of Sufism in verse. I hope, in view of what I am going to say here, that that rather one-sided view of Ibn al-'Arabi's works will be corrected, and that he will be increasingly seen as having also been a wonderfully concise and intense writer of esoteric poetry.

Having said all that, however, we would look in vain in the *Dîwân* for that chaotic, surging sea of fable, anecdote and insight which is so marked a feature of the wonderful treasure trove of Rumi's *Mathnawî*[4] as for the profound and rich Sufi love poetry of 'Umar b. al-Farid.[5] In the *Dîwân* he does indeed offer us a wide variety of poetic styles and topics, but the poetic genius of Ibn al-'Arabi is much more razor-like and taut, revealing always to us the great teacher he must have been, the great creator of structured visions, and not of closely woven ontological tapestries. Thus, the overall impression of the poetry of the *Dîwân* is less that of a great mystical forest than that of a magnificently constructed, and finely-decorated and embellished castle or fortress of Sufi doctrine and experience.

Another charming aspect of the *Dîwân* is that, interspersed among the mighty battlements of doctrine, and the heaven-soaring turrets and pinnacles of unitive ecstasy, there are all sorts of gems of autobiographical revelation and humorous self-reflection, sombre admonitions to disciples and words of encouragement for distressed aspirants. Much of the work was, I think, written and compiled in the later years of his life, and thus evinces much of the accumulated wisdom and insight of long experience, although there are pieces from some of his other works, and other phases of his life. One of the first poems in the collection is the first ode he ever wrote.[6] Of course, another fact, which should have long ago persuaded all of us that the Shaykh was as much a great poet as prose writer, is the huge quantity of poetry scattered throughout his prose works. For instance, there must be many hundreds of poems in the *Futûhât*, indeed, probably as many as there are in the work at present under consideration, if not more.

Before going on to study particular poems and their significance and context in more detail, it is of interest to examine in a general way the kind of material the *Dîwân* contains. Apart from special sections devoted to particular topics, there is no special arrangement or order to the poems of the work. Some of the more usual Sufi subjects covered include poems on spiritual light, gnosis, spiritual attitudes and spiritual interpretations of the ritual practices of Islam. As regards poetic styles, there are many pages of poems in the distinctive form of *muwashshahât*. There are poems of only two or three lines, and a small collection of one-liners. Of more immediate interest, perhaps, in an overall survey of this kind, are the special categories of poems including those of autobiographical interest, of which more later.

Of these categories, perhaps the most prominent are the group of poems on the 114 chapters of the Qur'an,[9] the poems on the letters of the Arabic alphabet, and the large poem of eighty-six lines in the middle of the work on the Names of God. In the case of the Qur'an, Ibn al-'Arabi has composed a poem of six or seven lines for each chapter dealing with the *rûh*, or spirit, of each *sûrah*. For the letters of the alphabet he has composed a poem for each letter, in which the first letter of each verse and the final rhyming letter are the letter concerned – quite a difficult thing to do. The long poem on the Names of God is a powerful composition dealing with the meanings of the Divine Names, nearly every line of which ends with the words *huwa Allâh*, 'is God'.

At this juncture I would like to discuss what I perceive to be two main types of poetic expression in his *Dîwân*, namely, the type which is largely didactic, and doctrinal in form and content, and the other type which is more ecstatic and paradoxical in its expression. For this purpose I have selected two poems, one of each type, to illustrate my point. The first poem deals with the question of Being and existence, divine creativity and essentiality. It is very typical of a large number of poems in the *Dîwân* which expound his well-known teachings in verse:

1. The Creative Command is God's while the object of the Command is in latent non-existence. If the process of creation is attributed to Him, [illegible] denies it.
2. Indeed, the Command '*Be*' is your Lord's, but the creative process is not. It pertains to the object of the Creative Command sharing with it.
3. Thus [illegible] the [illegible] of the scripture tell it, nor has anything come to abrogate it.
4. Exalted be He, how wonderfully self-sufficient [illegible] is, being in [illegible] of nothing, rather being [illegible] sought by this world of existence and the Names.
5. He is the One named by them, while the Essence is One. Were there any real dependence, there would be a real quest.

6. My Lord has only one Essence, nor may I attain to It, seeing how very, very difficult is such a quest.[10]

The second poem is very different in tone and rhythm, dramatically and vividly almost straining to express, within the bounds of language which can barely sustain the experience, the primordial tension between the [illegible] and otherness of divine love. In this poem [illegible] that other aspect of Ibn al-'Arabi's spiritual expression in which he soars [illegible] almost impossible heights of unitive experience, and in which he tries to force the tool of words and language to carry the surging power of his vision, the result being almost like the overloading of electrical power lines:

1. There is none having being who says, 'O My Lord',
2. Except [illegible] Himself, [illegible] High, even [illegible] I say, 'O My Lord!'
3. I see [illegible] lover [illegible] separate in the passion of a lover,
4. Since his only passion is to be one with my very love.
5. For in his passion there flows the current of appealing and answering.
6. I [illegible] no separate beloved whom my love loves,
7. Since my beloved is only he who loves with my [illegible] love.
8. In my beloved's passion I [illegible] happy to breathe my last.
9. For I have no beloved with whom my [illegible] is well content,
10. Since how [illegible] I be [illegible] with one who claims my love as His?[11]

In those lines [illegible] is surely able to feel an intense, holy frustration [illegible] the inability of mere words to adequately cope with spiritual vision. This vision and its powerful manifestation in words, however, has a sharp, razor-like quality which is rather different from the more passionate and warmer outbursts of [illegible] Rumi or an Attar. Here, [illegible] that the words are being deliberately pushed to their limits, finely honed and crafted to utter the terse pulsing of ineluctable articulation. These then are the two basic kinds of poetry to be found within the pages of the *Dîwân*.

Turning [illegible] to that remarkable collection of poems devoted [illegible] the chapters of the Qur'an, [illegible] find there also something of the division of style and kind just illustrated. His short poem [illegible] the spirit of the *sûrah* of the Angels (XXXV) shows very well not only his talent for translating doctrine and experience into verse, but also his ability [illegible] many occasions to sum up in [illegible] most brilliantly succinct way a whole teaching:

1. God's self-sufficiency is from us, just as [illegible] utter need derives from Him, which He knows (in us).
2. For God is called among His creatures by the various names you are all familiar with, He being impartial and equitable.
3. Should anyone ask you concerning His state, then reply, to [illegible] fair [illegible] Him, that He is Himself.[12]

This ability of his to articulate [illegible] whole [illegible] of Sufi teaching in [illegible] few [illegible] is also beautifully illustrated in his short poem [illegible] the spirit of the

chapter of the [redacted] (XVI), where he brilliantly shows the difference between profane and sacred knowledge and self-consciousness:

1. Divine inspiration is [redacted] way of learning about existence, although it is [redacted] from those learned in 'categories'.
2. Thus does [redacted] ignorant of [redacted] [redacted] enormities always deny its validity.
3. [redacted] the truly wise [redacted] records what [redacted] come to his vision or his thought, seeking to delight by the re-telling of it,
4. [redacted] makes it [redacted] [redacted] one who will savour it as an experience, only the niggardly spurning it.[13]

In another short poem on the chapter of *A'râf* (VII) Ibn al-'Arabi delightfully plays [redacted] the triple meaning of the important Arabic root *'araſa*, which is the root of the Sufi key word *ma'rifah* [redacted] gnosis, but which also denotes sublimity or elevation and perfume – [redacted] theme which he deals with at greater length in the final chapter of the *Fusûs al-Hikam* in relation to the famous tradition of the Prophet Muhammad [redacted] ing women, perfume and prayer.[14] In his poem on the chapter of Prostration (XXXII), he [redacted] again [redacted] to the more enigmatic, [redacted] and [redacted] expression of the paradoxes of the divine–human relationship. Here are [redacted] lines from the poem:

1. The solace of the eye (in prayer) is nothing other than [redacted] solace of mine own eye.
2. For is not all passionate commitment 'twixt me and me?
3. By God, but for my earthly existence my eye would not look upon another eye.
4. For in its existence I see nought more perfect than mine own form and becoming.
5. Indeed, it is only by separation that I have resolved all separation (in unity), [redacted] that my separateness appreciates its separation.[15]

Here Ibn al-'Arabi plays partly upon the double meaning of the word *bain*, which may [redacted] both separation and meeting.

As [redacted] pointed out earlier, the task facing the Shaykh al-Akbar in composing the poems on the letters of the alphabet [redacted] a little [redacted] daunting in that he [redacted] himself to compose poems in which both the initial and final letter of the verse are the letter being addressed. Here I will look [redacted] three of those [redacted] by way of illustration. The first poem of the group, on the letter *Alif*, [redacted] itself with the relationship between the Real and its Names:

1. I [redacted] to [redacted] Reality [redacted] shown forth in His [redacted] [redacted] [redacted] being [redacted] universal [redacted] particular [redacted]
2. To see whether I might get [redacted] fair hearing from the one Who understands well my apparent alternations of avoidance [redacted] approach.
3. My Lord's [redacted] [redacted] without number, immeasurable, unlike my own.
4. When I speak it is only by Him and when He speaks it is through us, [redacted] mutual intermingling such [redacted] applies to the observer and the observed.

5. The Essence is one while its effects [redacted] various, [redacted] consider by Him, from (what you know of) yourself, what I [redacted] getting at.
6. Light has [redacted] distinguishing colour of its own, deriving its colour, like water, from the glass [redacted] is in.
7. Water [redacted] no form [redacted] restrict and constrain it except the vessel containing it, [redacted] my ailment is in [redacted] constraint.
8. It is a deeply-hidden sickness without [redacted] cure. How can there be a cure seeing that my ailment and my remedy [redacted] [redacted] and the same?
9. I seek the relief of a cure which will [redacted] fail me, but how [redacted] earth [redacted] [redacted] sickness [redacted] that which treats the sickness?
10. I speak with the *lâm* (of duality) and not with the *bâ'* of (divine agency), since there are those who would take [redacted] to task for speaking with the *bâ'*.[16]

In his charming poem on the letter *Tâ'* Ibn al-'Arabi turns, [redacted] he does so often, to the theme of the *Tarjumân al-Ashwâq*, the sophianic feminine as [redacted] source of spiritual wisdom and inspiration. Here [redacted] the last lines of that poem:

7. The inner realities of my heart addressed themselves to her very essence, nor [redacted] I distinguishable from her in every place.
8. Although she turned away there [redacted] no (true) separation, [redacted] although she separated from [redacted] she moved [redacted] a step, since I [redacted] but an effect of her and she my [redacted]
9. When I said that she is the condition of my becoming, it [redacted] merely a heedless fancy about her.
10. O my essence, I [redacted] high up [redacted] found nothing [redacted] [redacted] (you and I); nor is she [redacted] [redacted] as I, so realize the root of my confusion.[17]

In a very similar vein, but owing less to the classical Arab ode, Ibn al-'Arabi speaks in his poem on the letter *Sâd* of the way in which God had sought him out to be the author of the *Fusûs al-Hikam*. In the first line he says that God hunted him down as his own mind had hunted God. In this poem, he speaks of the sophianic lady of inspiration in terms of a treasure of knowledge deposited in his heart.[18]

Scattered throughout the poems of the *Dîwân* are several concerned with events, experiences and relationships in his [redacted] life, perhaps the [redacted] poignant of these being [redacted] reference to the death of [redacted] daughter of his, and perhaps the most humorous being [redacted] delightfully light-hearted poem on the perils of self-deception. In the former he speaks of his having laid the body of his dead daughter in the grave with his own hands. Perhaps this [redacted] that [redacted] young child who [redacted] greeted him so enthusiastically with cries of 'Daddy! Daddy!' when he joined his family at Mecca after [redacted] journey to Iraq.[19] In one curious poem [redacted] celebrates the brilliance of the seventh chapter of the *Futûhât* after it [redacted] been read back to him, calling it [redacted] miracle and challenging anyone to rival it. He likened its contents to milk to nourish souls.[20]

Many of the references to his own life are to visions and dreams he

had, [redacted] also often to passing allusions he perceived in the street. In [redacted] such perception, he heard [redacted] beggar in the market place begging with the words, 'O You Who [redacted] All and of Whom all are.' He then spontaneously composed the following lines:

1. I chanced to hear [redacted] who [redacted] [redacted] what [redacted] [redacted] talking about saying of God that He is All and all are of Him.
2. Indeed it [redacted] [redacted] divine [redacted] which enabled him to articulate the truth shown forth [redacted] the [redacted] of it and the subject of his utterance.[21]

Some lines which resulted from a dream of his are dated for the night of Friday the 27th of *Safar* 631/1234, six years before he died. He dreamt that he [redacted] standing [redacted] [redacted] grave, into the wall of which had been placed [redacted] piece of paper on which the deceased had written:

1. They called us to account in every detail and pinned us down hard,
2. [redacted] after looking carefully [redacted] our works they kindly let us go.

When those at the grave rejoiced at the lines, Ibn al-'Arabi said that he should have added the following two lines:

1. All my thoughts and ideas about God have [redacted] realized.
2. For [redacted] who has lived his life well escapes the flames of Hell.[22]

Having fallen ill on one occasion, he bemoaned his lot in some rather pitiable lines:

1. I am afflicted on every side with discomfort [redacted] I [redacted] greatly troubled with insomnia and mental disquiet.
2. Being subjected to such trials [redacted] greatly annoyed me and quite distracted me from [redacted] trivial and momentous.
3. Invigorated though my heart be by its confidence in my Creator, my ears and eyes are sorely weakened.
4. All my [redacted] plans are now thwarted by my pitiful reduction to 'abject frailty'.
5. While summoned by my spirit [redacted] lofty realms, my flesh drags [redacted] down to the tomb and the pit.
6. [redacted] for my desperate clinging to God I would have sunk [redacted] of sight, and but for my holding on to bodily life I would have come to the very brink of death.[23]

Of course, Ibn al-'Arabi was, as well [redacted] [redacted] prolific author, [redacted] spiritual master and teacher, and I offer you [redacted] two examples from the *Dfwân* of his thoughts on his disciples' predicaments. First, a rather fierce, magisterial poem addressed to [redacted] certain Yusuf b. Abu Ishaq, who clearly [redacted] of [redacted] somewhat wayward nature:

1. Please don't presume to make claims upon the path you [redacted] travelling, for it is only for [redacted] [redacted] [redacted] order its traversing.
2. You [redacted] restless only [redacted] your own [redacted] for the journey are no match for those of its own folk.

3. You are the sort to whom God's saying in the Qur'an applies, 'He will teach you,' since you have had [redacted] than enough of ambitions.
4. If you seriously seek my counsel, then don't push your [redacted] aims, but conform much more closely to those of God's Path.
5. Did you but [redacted] with my eye rather than yours, I would not find you now vacillating between fear and self-approval.
6. My disciples [redacted] noted for their patience with afflictions, both night [redacted] day, so, Yusuf b. Abu Ishaq, [redacted] like them [redacted] a lost soul.
7. But you [redacted] of mean and ungenerous nature, else you would [redacted] draw back from [redacted] so.[24]

One wonders what became of poor, errant Yusuf!

In quite [redacted] different vein is a poem, short but to the point, addressed to an unfortunate disciple who, in his distress with life in Egypt, walked to Damascus. He counselled him thus:

1. There [redacted] places which offer but [redacted] consolation, while others afford [redacted] great delight.
2. However, make you thy Lord the mainstay and refuge of your soul, wherever and however you may be.[25]

Finally, I offer you a poem in which the great Sufi Master takes [redacted] wry look [redacted] himself and his spiritual endeavours, revealing an engaging humility of perception:

1. I found myself looking upon my soul with [redacted] approving eye. So, my soul laughed out loud in [redacted] of my ignorance of her.
2. She sought out the intellect, chiding it saying, 'Can anyone who is taken in by my ways really know himself (his soul)?'
3. How can there be [redacted] question of approval, seeing that he is still full of cunning and self-deceit?
4. From then [redacted] I took [redacted] my guide her amazement [redacted] my foolishness.[26]

During the course of this paper I have, of course, only been able to offer you a very brief and cursory glance at [redacted] truly profound and expansive compilation of the poems of [redacted] great spiritual master, and I hope that I have been able [redacted] give you [redacted] idea of the great depth and variety of this wonderful collection of poems, of the finely sculpted doctrinal edifices, and the soaring flights of vision and ecstasy, the profoundly serious and the more light-hearted.

It is to be hoped that more and more of this work will become available [redacted] non-Arabists in translation, if only translations of the main groups of poems. However, translating material of this kind is fraught with difficulties and perils by reason, not least, of the great subtlety and ingenuity of the author, since in poetry, [redacted] [redacted] than in prose, Ibn al-'Arabi [redacted] able to give his linguistic expertise [redacted] his profound spiritual insights much fuller rein, not to speak of the scope for [redacted] which the poetic medium itself presents to the translator.

In conclusion, here is one of the [redacted] profound single lines of [redacted] which appear in the *Dîwân*:

> **Rapture inexorably reveals that which it would keep**
> **hidden, just as traces of the Divine One [redacted]**
> **unavoidably discernible in you and me.**[27]

NOTES

1. *Histoire et Classification de l'Oeuvre d'Ibn 'Arabi*, 2 Vols, Damascus, 1964.
2. *Bezels of Wisdom*, tr. R.W.J. Austin, New York, 1980.
3. [redacted] Vols, Cairo, [redacted] AH.
4. *Sufi Path of Knowledge*, New York, [redacted]
5. Ed. [redacted] tr. R.A. Nicholson, London, 1911.
6. Ed. [redacted] tr. R.A. Nicholson, London, 1926; repr. 1972.
7. Cf. R.A. Nicholson, *Studies in Islamic Mysticism*, Cambridge, 1921.
8. *Dîwân*, p. 5.
9. *The Koran Interpreted*, tr. A.J. Arberry, Oxford, 1964.
10. *Dîwân*, p. 270.
11. *Dîwân*, p. 467.
12. *Dîwân*, p. 150.
13. *Dîwân*, p. 142.
14. Cf. *Bezels*, pp. 278–9.
15. *Dîwân*, p. 149.
16. *Dîwân*, p. 218.
17. *Dîwân*, p. 219.
18. *Dîwân*, p. 224.
19. *Dîwân*, p. 340; cf. *Futûhât*, IV, p. 117.
20. *Dîwân*, p. 79.
21. *Dîwân*, p. 324.
22. *Dîwân*, p. 277.
23. *Dîwân*, p. 179.
24. *Dîwân*, p. 181.
25. *Dîwân*, p. 388.
26. *Dîwân*, p. 377.
27. *Dîwân*, p. 49.

The Esoteric Foundations of Political Legitimacy in Ibn 'Arabi'

MICHEL CHODKIEWICZ

'His two Hands [illegible] right Hand'
(Muslim, Sahîh, *Imâra*, 18)

Agent of Mercy, the saint is necessarily [illegible] the same time the instrument of Rigour, and this assures the conformity of the terrestrial sphere to the orders of Divine wisdom. A complete doctrine of sainthood cannot therefore avoid [illegible] definition of political legitimacy nor, *a contrario*, dispense with establishing the principles of action in the face of tyranny, that is to say, disorder.

The works of the Shaykh al-Akbar reply to these two points, but, before examining the writings of Ibn 'Arabi, it will be useful to say something about the relationship between the author and the established authorities. In the Sufi tradition in Andalusia and the Maghreb the 'sufi rebel' is a familiar figure. Ibn 'Arabi mentions with respect several times in his writings three of these who died just before he was born, who [illegible] well remembered, and who had several disciples still living: namely, Ibn al-'Arif (d. 536/1141), Ibn Barrajan (d. 536/1141) and Ibn Qasi (d. 546/1151)[2] – three men who [illegible] involved in [illegible] armed revolt against the *almoravids*, the last two meeting a tragic end. The biography of Ibn 'Arabi gives no apparent evidence of attitudes similar to that of these insurgents.

During his childhood in Murcia the *khutba*, the weekly sermon, [illegible] delivered, [illegible] he remembered while composing his *Muhâdarât al-Abrâr*, in the [illegible] of the Abbasid Caliph al-Mustanjid;[3] a quite theoretical allegiance since the sovereignty belonged in fact to Ibn Mardanish who reigned, without [illegible] to anyone, in the south-east of Spain. The supposition that [illegible] 'Arabi's father [illegible] the Vizier of this king [illegible] unfounded, but he was certainly one of the town dignitaries. Several years later, after the victory of the Almohads [illegible] the death of Ibn Mardanish, Ibn 'Arabi's family seemed to have no difficulty in adapting to a [illegible] regime, installing themselves in Seville under [illegible] protection of Abu Ya'qub Yusuf. When an adult, Ibn 'Arabi certainly kept his distance: he refused the invitation from the Almohad sovereign – by this time Abu Yusuf Ya'qub al-Mansur – to [illegible] his service, and also the proposal that Abu Yusuf made to arrange the marriage of his

sisters.[4] One day, ■ Ceuta, Abu Yusuf ■■■ him some food: he refrained from touching it and forbade his companions to do so also.[5] This pious attitude, very widespread among the Sufis, did not call into question the legitimacy of this ruler whom Ibn 'Arabi usually described ■■ 'Sultan', but also ■ *Amir al-mu'minin*,[6] the 'Emir of the believers'.

In the East, Ibn 'Arabi ■■■ to have quite close relations with several local princes, notably with the Seljuk Kay Kaus,[7] for whom, after a vision, he predicted his victory ■■■ the Byzantines ■ Antâkiyya. He exercised the right to advise Kay Kaus and addressed a letter ■ him, the ■■■ of which is extant: this admonition (which particularly concerned the ■■■■■ of Christians) also belongs to ■ traditional Islamic genre. Others ■■■ much more ■■■■ in their censure of those in power.

Ibn 'Arabi was equally close to several members of the Ayyubid family. The story reported by the *Nafh al-Tîb*, whose ■■■ on the Shaykh al-Akbar is given in ■■ appendix to the *Futûhât*,[8] according to which Ibn 'Arabi, threatened with death in Cairo, ■■■ saved by the intervention of Shaykh Abu'l-Hasan al-Baja'i with Al-Malik al-Adil ■■■ on a passage in the *Unwân al-dirâya* of Ghubrini (d. 704/1308)[9] which does not inspire much confidence, and which is not confirmed ■ my knowledge by any reference in Ibn 'Arabi's writing. On the other hand, ■■ know that this Shaykh ■■■ one of the intimates of Al-Malik al-Zahir, the King of Aleppo[10] and that he granted an *ijâza* dated the year 632 of the *hegira*, to the Ayyubid ruler of Damascus, Al-Malik al-Ashraf Muzaffar al-din.[11]

■■■ he denounce, in public or in private, the ■■■■ of Al-Kamil, who gave up Jerusalem to Frederick II in 626/1229? It is highly likely because ■ ■■■■■ in the *Futûhât*[12] enjoins the Muslims of that time (*fî* ■■■■ *al-zamân*) not to visit the holy city (*al-bayt al-maqdis*) ■■■ to stay there 'because it is in the hands of infidels' (*li-kawnihi bi-yad al-kuffâr*): but I have found no decisive proof on this matter. Finally, as far as the Alhasid caliphate is concerned, ■■■ though Ibn 'Arabi stayed ■ least twice in Baghdad (in ■11 and 608)[13] and met al-Nasir li-din Allah who ■■■ still reigning, the ■■■■■ that ■■■ *Muhâdarât al-Abrâr* dedicates to this sovereign[14] contains no more than the usual eulogies: ■ surprising degree of discretion since it concerned one of the most important figures of ■■■ dying dynasty.

In short, in this turbulent world at the end of the twelfth and beginning of the thirteenth centuries, where the unity of the Islamic world had been no more than ■ myth for a long time, where a large number of princes ■■■■ tearing each other ■■ pieces, betraying each other and were rarely the exemplary image of the *imâm adil*, the 'just sovereign', Ibn 'Arabi refused favours ■■■ criticized or advised where necessary. ■■■ ■■ no time did he, ■■ others ■■■ done before ■■ would do after, begin a *jihâd* – ■■■■ ■ verbal one – against the established order. Was it because the

resistance [redacted] the *reconquista* from the West, the struggle against the Crusaders and the Byzantines in the East took priority for him? Or should one look [redacted] it as a [redacted] of principle?

We [redacted] ourselves with these doctrines relative [redacted] the *imâmat* and firstly to those which relate in [redacted] clearly exoteric way. The searcher's first step, in such [redacted] situation, consists in consulting the *'aqîda*, the 'profession of faith', of the author concerned, if he took the time to write one. In the case of Ibn 'Arabi [redacted] is thus tempted to turn [redacted] the *Tadhkirat al-Khawwâs*, translated by Roger Deladrière, precisely under the title of *La profession de foi*.[15]

There[16] [redacted] can read this categorical affirmation: 'It is [redacted] legitimate for any Muslim to fight against the holder of power (*al-sultân*) [redacted] take [redacted] against him [redacted] if [redacted] is [redacted] oppressor who does [redacted] dispense justice, and whoever does so is [held as] blameworthy'. Unfortunately, it is certainly erroneous to attribute this work to Ibn 'Arabi; its author is doubtless a Hanbalite from the Qadiri order of [redacted] later date.[17] We shall, however, use other documents which [redacted] plainly authentic; firstly the three successive *'aqidâs* that Ibn 'Arabi puts in the introduction [redacted] the *Futûhât* – while noting that [redacted] real profession of faith', which he calls *'aqîda Khulâsat al-khâssa* (the profession of faith of the elite of the elite) is not to be found there, but is, he says: 'dispersed among the chapters of this book'.[18] In the second of these texts, presented as [redacted] simple résumé of the *Iqtisâd fi'l-i'tiqâd* of Ghazali, Ibn 'Arabi puts forward very classical formulae on the necessity of the *imâm*, on the conditions for succeeding to the *imâma* (being male, having reached puberty, a free man, of the Quraysh lineage (*nasab*), to have [redacted] infirmity of sight [redacted] hearing, etc.), and [redacted] specifies that when two pretenders [redacted] in opposition, one must make an allegiance (*'aqd*) with the one who carries the majority. As for deposing the *imâm nâqis*, the imperfect sovereign, that is forbidden since it risks bringing about general disorder (*fasâd shâmil*).[19]

In the long chapter on *sâlat* in the *Futûhât*, the prayer carried out behind the *imâm fâsiq* ('prevaricating') is on the other hand declared licit, [redacted] if the *fâsiq* quality of the person in question is known without doubt (*al-maqtu' bi-fisqihi*): [redacted] traditional position identical [redacted] to that expressed in the apocryphal *Tadhkira*. However, [redacted] that the justification advanced is [redacted] legal, but metaphysical: [redacted] creatures, [redacted] Ibn 'Arabi, are in their essence, whether they wish it [redacted] not, *'ibâd Allâh*, servants of God, and this original characteristic cannot [redacted] effaced by the sin which is itself only [redacted] accident.[20]

But what is the *imâm fâsiq*? A story quoted in the *Muhâdara*[21] shows that a distinction [redacted] made between the private life of the sovereign and the way in which he carries out his duties: [redacted] Cordova, 'Abd al-Rahman – we are probably dealing here with the third sovereign of

this name, that is to say, the first Umayyad Caliph of Spain – one day found himself being reproached for devoting himself in isolation to entertainments, [illegible] the pleasures of the table and of drink. He replied to the protestors by asking them: 'The ways, [illegible] they sure? The judges, do they render justice? The enemy, [illegible] subjugated? So, what [illegible] do you want?' Ibn 'Arabi [illegible] quite satisfied with this reply.

What, [illegible] other hand, will be his attitude when it is in the very accomplishment of his role in the community that the *imâm* shows himself as *fâsiq*? I stress [illegible] in this context *fâsiq* and *jâ'ir* have the same meaning: they are equally well applied to the one 'who doesn't put things in their [rightful] place' – by which we understand the place assigned [illegible] them by divine wisdom, of which the sacred law is the expression.

This attitude is defined unambiguously in a passage in the *Futûhât* where Ibn 'Arabi deals with the Caliphate and Royalty.[22] The *imâms* that God has chosen for his substitutes and lieutenants (*al-ladhîna istanâbahum Allâh wa istakhlafahum*) are divided, he says, into two categories: the just, who respect the sacred Law, and the unjust (*al-jâ'irûn*). God sometimes affords these latter a respite and they may prevail over Him. But sooner or later God raises [illegible] pretender against them, who opposes them while calling men *ilâ'l-haqq wa ilâ tarîq* [illegible] *qîm* ('towards truth and the straight way'). 'When this pretender appears God obliges all His servants to fight [illegible] his side, to defend his right, to assist him and to take power away from the unjust, (*al-jâ'ir*)': [illegible] clear affirmation, then, of the duty of rising up as soon as a pretender stands against impiety in the name of truth and justice. *A posteriori*, it justifies, among others, [illegible] revolt against the Almoravids [illegible] by Ibn Barrajan 'in the [illegible] of which the *khutba* [illegible] pronounced in nearly [illegible] hundred and thirty villages',[23] [illegible] that which Ibn Qasi led in the Algarve.

These are, however, ideas which [illegible] could equally well expect from [illegible] *faqîh* simply concerned about the *shari'a* and the [illegible] good. But the legitimacy of the imamate – and, in consequence, the eventual necessity to struggle against an illegitimate *imâm* – has its basis, in Ibn 'Arabi, in the most esoteric aspect of his teaching, [illegible] precisely in his doctrine of *walâya*. I have analysed elsewhere the main features of this doctrine[24] and I will thus limit myself here to bringing into relief that which bears directly on the question of the imamate. In chapter 360 of the *Futûhât* (where he examines the various degrees, or forms, of *niyâba*, substitution, one of the key words of his hagiology) Ibn 'Arabi defines what the true *imâm* [illegible] be, or rather the true *khalîfa* (caliph) – this latter term, which is the one used by the Qur'an concerning the investiture of Adam (Qur'an 2:30), claims his preference. 'He [the man] is not truly the substitute of God [*nâ'iban 'anhu ta'âlâ*] unless He who has made him His lieutenant and His substitute is his hearing, his sight, [illegible] hand and all [illegible] faculties.'[25] We recognize here without difficulty an

allusion to a well-known *hadîth qudsî*[26] often quoted by the Sufis, but which Ibn 'Arabi uses time and again in his work in an interpretation which gives the deepest meaning of the sentence I have just quoted: for him, this *hadîth* means that God 'becomes' the very being of the servant (*'abd*) who has 'approached' Him with supererogatory works or, more exactly, that the *'abd*, delivered from illusory ego, realizes God had always been his hearing, his sight, his hand . . .[27] The legal conditions of the imamate (*shurût al-imâma*) are completed here by the demand for an exceptional spiritual perfection evidently not mentioned by the doctors of the Law.

Another in the *Futûhât*, in chapter 73, is explicit.[28] In effect it stated there that, for Ibn 'Arabi, *qutbiyya* (the function of the esoteric Pole) and *khilâfa* (caliphate) are the thing; writes: 'The *qutb* [Pole] is the real head of the community of his epoch (*sayyid al-jamâ'a fî zamânihî*).' But, he adds also, among the Poles (*aqtâb*):

> . . . there those for whom authority is manifested who hold the exterior caliphate just by virtue of their spiritual degree they hold the interior caliphate. Such was the of Abu Bakr, of 'Umar, of 'Uthman, and of 'Ali, of and of Mu'awiya b. Yazid, of 'Umar b. al-'Aziz and of Mutawakkil. Others only hold interior caliphate and have no exteriorly-manifested authority: such is the case of Ahmad b. Harun al-Rashid al-Sabti of Abu Yazid al-Bistami and the majority of the Poles.

Thus we see that the apparent holders of power – including the nominal caliph – in general way, whether they aware of it or not, only substitutes (*nuwwâb*) for the Pole (who, Ibn 'Arabi states, may be woman).[29] However, the Pole only holds *auctoritas* himself by delegation: is in turn, in effect, only the substitute (*nâ'ib*) given in human history, for transhistorical Pole, who Ibn 'Arabi identifies with one of the four always-living prophets, Idris, who resides in the sphere of the sun.[30] And this is all: Idris is himself only a substitute for the metahistorical Pole, which is no other than the *Rûh Muhammad* or the *haqîqa muhammadiyya*, the 'Muhammadian Reality'.[31]

The fall of those in power, the succession of dynasties has often inspired in Muslims a meditation which finds its scriptural support in the line of the *sûrah Al-Imrân*: 'You give royalty to whom You wish and You take it from whom You wish' (*tu'tî'l-mulka tashâ'u wa tanzi'u al-mulka mimman tashâ'u*) (Qur'an 3:26),[32] and led them to elaborate the concept of *dawla*, the 'wheel of Fortune' which Ibn was to give a rational exposition.[33]

We find an equivalent expression in Ibn 'Arabi, that of *dawrat al-mulk*. But in this instance we are very far from Ibn Khaldun: if the

bringing to reckoning of terrestrial kingdoms is not the effect of blind chance, no more is it the mechanical result of factors traceable by political science.

Ibn 'Arabi – who died in [redacted] – is himself reputed, in the *Risâlat al-Shajara al-Nu'mâniyya* which is wrongly attributed [redacted] him (in certain manuscripts this title is characteristically complemented by the sub-title *fî al-dawla al-uthmâniyya*), to have announced the destiny of the future Ottoman dynasty, and, notably, the conquest of Damascus by Selim in 1516. One finds inscribed on various monuments the famous verse which announced this event: *idhâ dakhala 'l-sîn fî 'l-shîn*.[34] But these laws which govern the succession of empires have their [redacted] in the 'hidden world' (*'âlam al-ghayb*) and it is the *dîwân al-awliyâ'*, the invisible college of saints, which controls the application of them. In the doctrine of the Shaykh al-Akbar, the deposing – by violence if necessary – of the *imâm fâsiq* is only the consequence of the withdrawal of the 'mandate from heaven', without which no terrestrial power has any vestige of reality. It is not given to the common man to know the day or the hour of this withdrawal: from this comes the recommendation – apparently [redacted] contradiction to the preceding – formulated in several instances, particularly the last chapter of the *Futûhât*,[35] [redacted] patiently put up with the bad ruler. Calling to question the established order [redacted] be left to an individual initiative based on [redacted] alone. Revolt against injustice is licit and [redacted] obligatory under certain conditions. [redacted] only the *'ârif bi-llâh*, the perfect gnostic, knows when the moment has arrived to take it up, and only he can indicate without error the [redacted] who divine wisdom has chosen to lead it. An agent of the initiatory hierarchy, the rebel Sufi is not therefore an accident of history: he directs the course of it.

These divinely inspired interventions by the *awliyâ'* – the saints, the 'friends of God' – in the [redacted] of affairs, if they do periodically redress the balance of things, [redacted] not however enough to [redacted] the reign of justice: at best they only establish [redacted] imperfect approximation. Politics, according [redacted] the 'akbarian' perspective, is not [redacted] 'art of the possible'; it is the *science* of the possibles – this latter word being taken here in its properly metaphysical [redacted] Now the ideal sovereign can only appear when the end of days approaches, with the advent of the *Mahdî* who 'will fill the earth with justice, just as it has been filled with injustice.'[36]

In effect only the *Mahdî* (to whom a long chapter of the *Futûhât* is dedicated) will hold at one and the [redacted] time the fullness of *auctoritas* and *potestas*. *Auctoritas* because he will judge 'as would the Envoy of God if he [redacted] present',[37] and not by virtue of [redacted] personal interpretation which could [redacted] from here [redacted] the rage of the doctors (*fuqahâ'*) deprived of their privilege to 'say what is right', and who will, [redacted] this point, be his worst enemies. Ibn 'Arabi writes that they would

pronounce the death [redacted] him if they [redacted] afraid of him.[38] *Potestas* because the infallible science of Law, which is the balance of Justice, will be joined in his person – and in him alone – with the absolute power [redacted] apply it: 'the two-edged sword and [redacted] will be brothers',[39] and no one will stand against him with [redacted]

In the meantime the [redacted] against injustice can only aim for the lesser evil. The triumph of good will only be assured [redacted] the conclusion of the last battle, [redacted] the dawn of the consummation of the centuries.[40]

NOTES

1. This study is [redacted] slightly reworked version of [redacted] given to the Round Table on 'The Struggle in Islam Against the Unjust Sovereign', held in Paris, Maison des Sciences de l'Homme, 12th May 1986.
2. For the references to Ibn al-'Arif in the works of Ibn 'Arabi, see *Futûhât al-Makkiyya*, Cairo, 1329h., [redacted] volumes, I, 93,112,175,228; III, 112; *Rûh al-quds*, Damascus, 1964, 64–6; for Ibn Barrajan, *Fut.* I, 60,297; II, 60; III, 77; *Mawâqi' al-nujûm*, Cairo, 1965, 142; for Ibn Qasi, *Fut.* I, 136,297,312,749; II, 52,160, 257,693; III, 7,24,165,326,354. In his (hitherto unpublished) commentary [redacted] the *Khal' al-na'layn* of Ibn Qasi, it is true Ibn 'Arabi is severely critical, but for [redacted] which have nothing to do with his political activity.
3. *Muhâdarât al-abrâr*, Damascus, 1968, 2 volumes, I.87. The authenticity of the *Muhâdarât* has sometimes been put in doubt; the suspicions are based on certain evident anachronisms that [redacted] can pick [redacted] in the printed editions. In part it is [redacted] question of marginal notes made by later copyists integrated by editors into the original text. The internal critique of the work establishes without doubt the cor- [redacted] of its attribution to the Shaykh al-Akbar.
4. Cf. the extract of the *Durra Fâkhira* translated by Austin, *The Sufis of Andalusia*, London, 1971, 75, 76, [redacted] [redacted] is on [redacted] 21 of his introduction that Austin puts the hypothesis [redacted] Ibn 'Arabi's father [redacted] the Vi[redacted] of Ibn Mardanish. In fact the indications that one could interpret in this way (*Rûh al-quds*, 125; Al-Qari al-Bagdadi, *Manâqib Ibn 'Arabi*, Beirut, 1959, 22) [redacted] rather his dealings with the Almohad Sultan. For Ibn 'Arabi's youth and, more generally, [redacted] the biographical data concerning him, [redacted] should now consult the work of Claude Addas, *Ibn 'Arabi ou la quête du soufre rouge* ('Ibn 'Arabi and the quest for the red sulphur'), an English translation of which is being published by the Islamic Texts Society, Cambridge.
5. *Rûh*, [redacted] At [redacted] end of the *Futûhât*, in the 'Chapter [redacted] Advice', Ibn 'Arabi [redacted] against frequenting sovereigns (IV, 490, 506) – [redacted] classical rule well expressed in [redacted] adage attributed to the Andalusian writer Abd al-Bari: 'The best of kings [redacted] those who frequent the *'ulamâ'*; the worst of the *'ulamâ'* [redacted] those who frequent kings.'
6. Cf. the [redacted] in the *Durra* quoted by Austin (note 4).
7. On the relations of Ibn 'Arabi with Kay Kaus see *Fut*, IV, 533,547; *Muhâdara*, II, 420,421,454–7. We should [redacted] in passing that Ibn 'Arabi – whose attitude to the rulers of his time is clearly [redacted] relation to, [redacted] other things, the role

they could play towards the Christians – had equally predicted the victory of the [redacted] at Los Alarcos in 591/1195. Cf. *Fut*, III, 140 [redacted] IV, 220.

8. *Fut*. IV, 559.
9. Ghubrini, *Unwân al-Dirâya*, Beirut, 1979, pp. 157–8.
10. Ibid. Ghubrini's work here obviously confuses Ibn 'Arabi with another person equally [redacted] Muhyi 'l-din.
11. The *ijâza* [redacted] by A.R. Badawi, *Al-Andalus*, XX I, 1955. Concerning the dealings of Ibn 'Arabi [redacted] the Ayyubid dynasty, [redacted] should remember that the real founder, Saladin, is considered by certain Sufis [redacted] having belonged to the high hierarchy of initiates (cf. Yâffi, *Rawd al-Rayyâhin*, Cairo, 1955, 432, which mentions also another grand sovereign – Nur al-din Zengi – as being one of the elite of saints: the just prince is not [redacted] completely unknown figure at [redacted] time).
12. *Fut*. IV, 460. For the reaction in Damascus to the treason of al-Kamil and notably [redacted] of Sibt b. al-Jawzi, [redacted] Abu Shama, *Tarajim*, Beirut, 1974, p. 154.
13. The [redacted] of [redacted] first stay is [redacted] by certificates of authenticity (*samâ'*) No. 1 [redacted] No. [redacted] of the [redacted] of the *Rûh al-Quds*, University of Istanbul, 1599/2nd 79A, cf. ff. [redacted] and 103; that of the second is given in *Fut*. II, 530 and [redacted] II, 473.
14. *Muhâdara*, I, 87. See also *Fut*. IV, 48. The meeting with a caliph who can only be Al-Nasir is mentioned in *Fut*. IV, 492.
15. Ibn 'Arabi, *La profession de foi*, trans. R. Deladrière, Paris, 1978.
16. Ibid., p. 268.
17. On this problem of attribution see the account of Denis Gril, [redacted] *critique des annales islamologiques*, 1984, 337–9; and the article of James W. Morris, 'Ibn 'Arabi [redacted] Interpreters', in [redacted] *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, Vol. 106, 1986, No. 3–4 and Vol. 107, 1987, No. 1.
18. *Fut*. I, 38,47.
19. *Fut*. I, [redacted] the *Fusûs al-Hikam* ed. Afifi, Beirut, 1946, I, 164, Ibn 'Arabi recalls the well-known [redacted] (Muslim, *Imâra*, 61) according [redacted] which, [redacted] allegiance has been made to two caliphs, one must kill the one that was recognized the last.
20. *Fut*. I, 446.
21. *Muhâdara*, II, 453.
22. *Fut*. IV, 3–4.
23. Sha'rani, *al-Tabaqât al-kubrâ*, Cairo, 1954, 1,17.
24. M. Chodkiewicz, *Le sceau des saints, prophétie et sainteté dans [redacted] doctrine d' Ibn 'Arabi*, Paris 1986, in particular Chapter VI.
25. *Fut*. III, [redacted]
26. Bukhari, *riqâq*, 38; Ibn Hanbal, VI, 256; Ibn Maja, *fitan*, 16. This [redacted] one of those retained by Ibn 'Arabi himself in his collection of [redacted] *qudsî*, [redacted] *al-anwâr*, Aleppo, 1927, No. 91.
27. *Fut*. I, 406. See also *Fut*. I, 203; III, 63,67,68,143,189,298; IV, 20,24,30,312,321, [redacted]
28. *Fut*. II, 6.
29. *Fut*. II, 26,35; III, [redacted]
30. *Fut*. II, 5, 455; [redacted] *al-isfâr*, Hyderabad, 1948, 32; *Tarjumân al-ashwâq*, Beirut, 1961, [redacted] (commentary [redacted] the 3rd poem).

31. *Fut.* I, 151.
32. It should be noted that according to the commentators, this line was revealed precisely in reply to a request the Prophet addressed to God that the Persian and Byzantine kingdoms should fall into community (cf. Tabari, *Tafsîr*, edition Shakir, VI, 300).
33. For the notion of *dawla*, see the article of F. Rosenthal, EI², s.v. equally the remarks of Roy P. Mottahedeh in his work *Loyalty and Leadership in Early Islamic Society*, Princeton, 1980, pp. 185–6. For the of the end of dynasties according to Ibn Khaldun, the translation of the *Muqaddima* by V. Monteil (*Discours sur l'histoire universelle*, Paris, 1978, volumes) chapter III, pp. 594–614. But declares determined by astrological conjunctions (ibid., p. 333).
34. Cf. Osman Yahya, *Histoire classification de l'oeuvre d'Ibn 'Arabi*, Damascus, 1964, 2 vols.) II, pp. 456–7. To manuscripts by O. Yahya should these copies belonging to the Garret collection, section (Princeton): *al-Shajara al-Nu'mâniyya*, 5131 (4497) ff. 19b–49b; Sadr Qunawi (attributed) *al-Luma' al-nûrâniyya fî hall mushkilât al-shajara al-nu'maniyya* 5132 (4497) ff. 5lb–106b; b. Aybak al-Safadi, *Sharh al-Shajara al-Nu'mâniyya*, 5133 (4535) ff. 26b–39b. For the incorrect attribution to Ibn 'Arabi of *al-Shajara al-Nu'maniyya* cf. Abd al-Qadir al-Jaza'iri, *al-mawâqif*, Damascus, 1967, II, 709.
35. *Fut.* IV, 484,490,506. See also *Fusûs al-Hikam*, I, 164–5.
36. The traditional eschatological data dealt with and evoked times in Ibn 'Arabi's work. We especially refer here to Chapter of *Futûhât*, (*Fut.* III, 327–40) dedicated to the *Mahdî* and his 'ministers' (*wuzarâ*). See also *Muhâdara*, I, 430–33; II, 32–3 (*hadîth* transmitted by Hudayfa b. al-Yaman) and Souad Hakim, *al-Mu'jam al-Sûfî*, Beirut, 1981, sv. *mahdî*.
37. *Fut.* III, 327.
38. *Fut.* III, 336.
39. *Fut.* III, 329.
40. From the of eschatological character used here, have only kept simple, macrocosmic meaning. We should, however, forget that, for Ibn 'Arabi, everything he says in these matters be interpreted equally and firstly in microcosmic terms: each man is in himself a 'community' (*umma*) where one finds all the functions of political society (caliph, vizier, *qâdî*, etc.). This theme is particularly developed in the *Tadbîrât ilâhiyya fî al-mamlaka al-insâniyya*, ed. Nyberg, Leiden, 1919. also the introduction to *'Anqâ' mughrib*, Cairo, 1954, pp. 5,6,7, where Ibn 'Arabi underlines the correspondences between eschatological and initiatory process: in each being there a

Muhyiddin Ibn al-'Arabi Amidst Religions (*adyân*) And Schools of Thought (*madhâhib*)

MAHMOUD AL-GHORAB

It is said that Abu al-Tayyib al-Mutanabbi is the man whose fame [redacted] the world, and who captured the minds of people. Undoubtedly this [redacted] is more appropriately said about al-Shaykh al-Akbar Muhyid- [redacted] Ibn al-'Arabi. Apart from the Prophets, people have never differed [redacted] widely about a man as they have about Shaykh al-Akbar. Some say that [redacted] attained the highest levels (*marâtib*) of Muhammadan sanctity (*walâya*); others say [redacted] a Muhammadan inheritor (*wârith*), and that he was the leader (*imâm*) of the people of verification (*tahqîq*), witnessing (*shuhûd*), and finding (*wujûd*); others considered him [redacted] atheist, [redacted] heretic, and to him attribute the doctrines of union (*ittihâd*) and oneness of being (*wahdat al-wujûd*).

Scholars of both East and West regarded him [redacted] outstanding philosopher of Islam and religions. A different group among them allege that he believed in the unity of all religions, while the Ismâ'îlis and other [redacted] say that he belongs to the esotericists (*al-bâtiniyya*). The majority of the learned people drowned in the oceans of knowledge of mysteries that the Shaykh brought, and they lost their way trying to decode, or explain the symbols (*rumûz*) of his allusions (*ishârât*), and indications of the knowledges of tasting (*dhawq*); hence the Shaykh's [redacted] in knowledge and jurisprudence did not concern them. Both Sunnis and Shi'ites disputed [redacted] to which of the two groups the Shaykh belonged. It was precisely these arguments and disagreements that led me to research the standing of the Shaykh amid these schools of thought [redacted] religious [redacted] (*tawâ'if*). I followed [redacted] strict method in my research and investigation, relying only upon the clear [redacted] written by Shaykh al-Akbar in [redacted] various books which have been accurately attributed [redacted] him.

SHAYKH AL-AKBAR AND THE SUNNIS

During his life Shaykh al-Akbar knew that within the scholarly circles there were those who said that [redacted] followed (*taqlîd*) the school of Ibn Hazm. This was the origin of the claim, among both early and latter day

Sunni scholars, that the Shaykh follows the Zâhirî school of thought (*madhhab*). In his reply to such allegations Shaykh al-Akbar said:

> They [illegible] that I follow [the school of] Ibn [illegible]
> although I'm not [illegible] who quotes [illegible]
> not [illegible] nor others, my writings quote
> [illegible] of the Qur'an: that is my knowledge
> what [illegible] Messenger [illegible]
> upon these I [illegible] my judgement.[1]

In vindication of what the Shaykh said, we find that he disagrees with the Zâhirî school on both the principles (*usûl*) and corollaries (*furû'*). As for principles, he disagrees with them when he says that, if a verse of the Qur'an was contradicted by [illegible] report transmitted by [illegible] single authority (*al-khabar al-wâhid*), then such [illegible] report would only denote supposition (*zann*). Such [illegible] report according to the Zâhirî principles, however, would denote certainty and finality.[2] This disagreement with the Zâhirî school about principle of *fiqh* occurs again when [illegible] al-'Arabi stresses the importance of observing the intentions (*maqâsid*) of the revealed law (*shari'a*),[3] and when he says that consideration of only the literal meaning (*al-mafhûm*) as evidence (*dalâla*) is weak, for it [illegible] reliably [illegible] true in every case.[4]

Regarding the corollaries, [illegible] find that Ibn al-'Arabi disagrees with the Zâhirîs on [illegible] occasions; for instance, in the [illegible] of touching women the Shaykh says that it does not invalidate ablution (*wudû'*),[5] while they say it does. He is also of the opinion that the funeral prayer should [illegible] performed for the one who commits suicide. This clearly demonstrates his disagreement with the literal meaning of the words of the *hadîth* relating to suicide, which declares that 'he is eternally disposed in Hell'. The Shaykh interprets the words of this [illegible] [illegible] indication of forcible prevention (*zajr*).[6] Such [illegible] understanding is [illegible] acceptable within the Zâhirî tradition.

The seeming agreement between Shaykh al-Akbar and the Zâhirîs in the [illegible] of rejecting analogical deduction (*qiyâs*) is best understood when we realize that [illegible] only rejected analogical deduction because [illegible] caused the vast increase in the number of practices prescribed by the law (*taklîf*), in contradiction with the desire of the Prophet (may God bless him and grant him peace) to make these fewer and easier for his community. Yet he defends the position of those who accept analogical deduction, identifies the legal [illegible] for their position, and approves of it;[7] this position is completely rejected by the Zâhirî school.

Regarding the other schools of Sunni community, Shaykh al-Akbar is among the later scholars. [illegible] wrote in detail about the various acquired (*kasb*) knowledges which he received from the scholars and [illegible] of [illegible] time. He mentions in the *Futûhât al-Makkiyyah* that [illegible] studies every

point of law (*masa'la fiqhiyya*), and the debate relating to each, which [redacted] the study of all evidence (*dalil*) up to his time.[8] This knowledge gave him the ability to differentiate between what is sound [redacted] what is weak. Thus, regarding certain aspects and specific points of [redacted] the principles and corollaries of the law, [redacted] find that he agrees with the four main schools of law, namely Hanafi, Mâlikî, [redacted] [redacted] Hanbalî, while on other issues he disagrees with one [redacted] more of these four, but only in the [redacted] way [redacted] disagreement exists between the four [redacted] open [redacted] of *ijtihâd*. This is identical to his stand regarding the [redacted] school where he agreed with them on [redacted] points and disagreed [redacted] others.

The Shaykh also introduced an unprecedented collection of judgements based on *ijtihâd* that are uniquely his. This verifies his rank [redacted] an absolute (*mujtahid*), [redacted] [redacted] follower of authority (*muqallid*), nor a follower belonging to any school (*tâbi'*). An example of his rank is his definition of *ijtihad*:

> We do [redacted] say that *ijtihâd* is what the exoteric scholars (*'ulamâ' al-rusûm*) described; rather *ijtihâd*, with [redacted] is striving to [redacted] [redacted] [redacted] in order [redacted] attain the inward (*bâtin*) preparedness through which [redacted] specific [redacted] (*al-tanazzul al-khâss*) is received.[9]
>
> Such [redacted] *mujtahid* would only receive exactly what the judgement is concerning a certain matter, [redacted] the [redacted] that, [redacted] the Messenger (may God [redacted] him and [redacted] [redacted] peace) been alive, he would only pronounce that precise judgement.[10]

A different example of his *ijtihâd* in the corollaries (*furû'*) is his judgement that a resident of Mecca can do *ihrâm* [redacted] his home for *'umra*: 'He can do *ihrâm* at his house for *'umra* [redacted] he does for *hajj*.'[11] Ibn Taymiyya, the [redacted] critical of Ibn al-'Arabi, copied this judgement, and attributed it to himself.[12] Although [redacted] read the *Futûhât*, [redacted] never referred the judgement to Ibn al-'Arabi, nor did he hint [redacted] to its source.

We witness how Ibn al-'Arabi makes [redacted] room within the legal parameters in order to accommodate the Muhammadan community. For example, he says: 'Forbidden deeds (*munkarât*),' [redacted] those clearly prohibited in the text.[13] This is how the alleviation of difficulties for the community [redacted] [redacted] sought. The Shaykh makes [redacted] [redacted] for the follower of authority (*muqallid*) who have [redacted] knowledge of legal matters, when he [redacted] that the *muqallid* should not adhere to [redacted] specific school of thought (*madhhab*), instead he can seek the most accommodating judgements in [redacted] law (*shar'*), and follow them, [redacted] this entails greater mercy for him.[14] The Shaykh's school of law (*madhhab*) is one that makes it easier for the community; he approves every concession (*rukhsa*) that [redacted] lawgiver (*shâri'*) permits, and lists it where it belongs. Whenever [redacted] law-giver permits [redacted] choice between two commands, [redacted] will always

choose the easiest. This is elaborated in my book, *Al-Fiqh 'ind al-Shaykh al-Akbar*.

SHAYKH AL-AKBAR AND THE SHITTES

The scholars and *imâms* of the Shî'a counted Shaykh Ibn al-'Arabi [redacted] be among their leading scholars and thinkers. 'Abd al-Razzaq al-Kashani said that Shaykh Ibn al-'Arabi [redacted] Shi'ite; he translated the *Fusûs al-Hikam* into Persian, and wrote [redacted] commentary on it; he is [redacted] *bâtinî* Shi'ite. He also wrote *Ta'wîlat al-Kâshânî*, which is wrongly attributed to Ibn al-'Arabi under [redacted] different title *Tafsîr Ibn al-'Arabî*, printed in two volumes. There is no doubt that al-Kashani, al-Hamawi, 'Aziz al-Nasafi, and those who translated the Shaykh's works into Persian, have both corrupted and distorted his writings either intentionally and deliberately, [redacted] due to lack of comprehension. They might also have been involved in the distortion of the Arabic copies of his writings, like the *Fusûs al-Hikam* and other works, which grossly harmed the Shaykh's standing among the Muslim scholars who attacked his belief (*'aqîda*), and attributed [redacted] him things he did not write in the works which are correctly established to be his. I have made this issue clear in my book *Sharh Fusûs al-Hikam*, where I compared more than eighty cases which totally contradict the reliably established opinion of the Shaykh, [redacted] mentioned in *al-Futûhât al-Makkiyya* and other authentic [redacted]

One who is not familiar with the verification of Ibn al-'Arabi's opinions might wonder about the common views that he shared with the early Shi'ite scholars. I would like to point out that such imaginary common views are only the result of miscomprehension, or the deliberate distortion by the Shi'ite, of what the Shaykh wrote in the *Futûhât* about the twelve Muhammadan Poles (*aqtâb*)[15] which the Shi'ites imagined to [redacted] their twelve *imâms*. It is on this assumption that they based [redacted] their misinterpretations of Ibn al-'Arabi's concepts, such as the meaning of the *walî* as mentioned by al-Nasafi who calls him *sâhib al-zamân*; this totally contradicts what Ibn al-'Arabi explains this [redacted] to mean as illustrated by James Morris.[16]

To verify Ibn al-'Arabi's affiliation, [redacted] have to look [redacted] what he writes about the companions in general, and about Abu Bakr and 'Umar (may God be pleased with them) in particular, and about the Shi'ite and the *imâmis* in general.

Concerning the companions, [redacted] writes:

> The companions of the Prophet (may God [redacted] him and grant him peace) gained the supreme station (*maqâm*) in this abode, [redacted] in the [redacted] of [redacted] (*dâr al-Talâm*), the highest degrees of nearness (*qurba*) [redacted] God, the [redacted]

(*tahaqquq*) of faith (*imân*) through companionship (*suhba*). If any of us were to spend for the sake of God an amount that is equal [illegible] the mountain 'Uhud', it would never reach in reward [illegible] *mudd* [a measure of weight equal to 543 gr.][17] of theirs, [illegible] even half of it, and none of us will be good enough to be a servant to [illegible] of them. We are the brothers; security (*amân*) [illegible] they are the companions, [illegible] they [illegible] loved ones.[18]

He also says:

The companions of the Prophet (may [illegible] him and grant him peace) have our good opinion (may God be pleased with all of them); we have no reason to [illegible] any of them, [illegible] though they disagreed amongst themselves, and it is not for [illegible] to plunge into the dispute that broke out between them, for they are the people of knowledge [illegible] *ijtihâd* [illegible] newly acquainted with Prophethood. They are rewarded in all their judgements based on *ijtihâd* whether it was right [illegible] wrong.[19]

As for Abu Bakr (may God [illegible] pleased with him), we find he says:

The highest [illegible] God's friends (*awliyâ'*) is Abu [illegible] (may God [illegible] pleased with him). It [illegible] inevitable [with leadership at stake] that there were those who [illegible] for, and those who were against [among the companions]. One who [illegible] reluctantly plunged into the affair did so, either because of an uncertainty (*shubuha*) that troubled him if [illegible] fear of God, [illegible] because of desire [illegible] passion if he [illegible] fear of God. As for those companions who [illegible] not accept his leadership, if it was [illegible] out of egocentric desire, [illegible] should excuse them through good opinion, but the rejection [illegible] the result of uncertainty [about Abu Bakr's leadership] which caused any one of them to consider himself as being more qualified for leadership (*imâma*) than Abu Bakr. This knowledge gained from [illegible] tainty is contradictory to God's knowledge: for in the knowledge of God [illegible] already been decreed that Abu Bakr would [illegible] a caliph [illegible] earth.[20]

He also [illegible] about Abu Bakr:

None of Abu [illegible] knowledge was ever exposed until the day the Prophet (may God [illegible] him and grant him peace) died, and the majority of the companions [illegible] baffled, and said what we know except for Abu Bakr. God granted [illegible] cess to demonstrate the strength He [illegible] given him, and that He exclusively qualified him to step forward and lead. The *Imâm* must be sober not drunk. The strength that he showed [illegible] that day proved that God had assigned him as the [illegible] (*muqaddim*) of the group, to [illegible] (*khalîf*) the community after the Prophet (may [illegible] him [illegible] grant him peace). The community then acknowledged the excellence of Abu Bakr over the rest of the companions; therefore, he deserved [illegible] put forward and deserved leadership.[21]

In another passage Ibn al-'Arabi says:

The ones who gave him allegiance (*bay'a*) did not do it in vain. Those who did not, refused either because they did not know about him that which they were also ignorant of concerning the Prophet (may God bless him and grant him peace), or because Abu Bakr's leadership was disputable in his opinion, or because of

> interpretation (*ta'wil*). For the Prophet (may God bless him and grant him peace) confirmed the excellence of Abu Bakr (may God be pleased with him) over the rest of the companions because of a secret that settled in his chest. The virtue of that secret became manifest later on that day.[22]

He also says: 'It is possible that the Pole (*qutb*) of the time is the *Imâm* himself, as was Abu Bakr and others during their time.[23] For more details [illegible] book *Al-Radd 'ala Ibn Taymiyya*.

About 'Umar Ibn al-Khattab (may God be pleased with him) he wrote:

> This is 'Umar the solid, the strong, the one over whom [illegible] no [illegible] of access, and hopes [illegible] just [illegible] escape from him into safety. The Qur'an descended in agreement with his judgement. [illegible] used to say: 'If the veil [illegible] I would not increase in certainty.' He does not know of it [the veil] because of his faith and knowledge. He gathered both knowledge and direct witnessing (*'ayân*) and took the [illegible] in the forefront of eye-witnessing (*mushâhada al-'ayân*). [illegible] his time and up until the day of resurrection (*qiyâma*) no-one [illegible] surpass him, and in [illegible] (*hâl*) would anyone come before him.[24]

Concerning the Shi'ites, he wrote:

> If you find yourself in the company of one of the *rawâfid*, and you know that he slanders the Companions, then you should never praise [illegible] even mention any of them, [illegible] he might, because of his disputatiousness, slander them, [illegible] therefore you will be responsible for their slander, for it [illegible] you who mentioned them in the first place.[25]

He also wrote:

> To God belongs all that is within [illegible] settled
> and all that is hidden and concealed
> He, glory be to Him for [illegible] heart
> is the best abode [tranquillity]
>
> Do [illegible] [wonder] saying, how could it [illegible]
> [truly] the heart is but [illegible]
> And do not be like one who out of ignorance
> exceeded the limit [of love] hence [illegible] tested
> Surely the people of rejection exceeded the limit
> in the affair of Husayn and Hasan.[26]

When he speaks about the people of innovation (*bid'a*) and desire (*hawâ'*), he says:

> Satans have given them a [illegible] premise (*asl*) which they [illegible] doubt, and, due to their lack of understanding, deceptions came upon them and led them astray. They attribute their misguidance to Satan because [illegible] was him that [illegible] the original premise. While, in reality, Satan in that case is but a student learning from them, if only they knew. This [illegible] mostly dominant among the Shi'ites, especially [illegible]

imâmis. At first Satans of *jinn* lured them into the exhaustive love of the Prophet's family, which they considered the most sublime oblation to God. In fact it is, if they only stopped the limits of loving the Prophet's family; instead they violated limits of such love in different ways. One group imagined that the Prophet's family are more entitled to these worldly positions [leadership], therefore took to hate, insulted the Companions because they the Prophet's family precedence; and carried on with the details [of slander] that known about them in this regard. The second group, in addition to insulting the Companions, blamed the Prophet (may God bless him and grant him peace), and (peace be upon him), God (supreme greatness), because they did clearly the rank of the Prophet's family, nor their entitlement to the leadership (*khilâfa*) of the community, to the one of them wrote: 'He who the trustworthy trustworthy.' All of these emanated from true premise, i.e. the love of the Prophet's family, which corrupted through their reflection, they astray and others astray too.[27]

In his book *Ijâz al-Bayân fî al-Tarjama 'an al-Qur'an*, when Ibn al-'Arabi interprets the verse: 'Say: Whoever is an enemy to Gabriel – for brings down the [revelation] on thy heart by God's will' (Q. II:97), he says:

> The Jews claim that God ordered Gabriel to keep the Prophethood in the children of Israel, but it to the Arabs, therefore they took him as an enemy. This is similar to what the people of rejection (*râfida*) did, when they claimed that God ordered Gabriel to give the Prophethood to 'Ali, and instead he Muhammad (may God bless him and grant him peace). This is just an aspect of what the Prophet foretold would happen to his community when he said in the 'You follow the footsteps [course of action] of those who before you, handspan by handspan, and a cubit by a cubit'; and in the report, 'They asked, "O Messenger of God, the Jews and the Christians?" replied, "Precisely". That the people of rejection followed Jews, and accused Gabriel of betrayal, is only a confirmation of that report. It precisely for this reason that God the exalted said: 'Say: Whoever is enemy to Gabriel', because Gabriel did not act of his own accord, neither did he deviate from the command of God; for it is God who revealed it on the heart of Muhammad 'by God's will', meaning by His command the exalted said, [the angels say]: 'We descend not but by command of thy Lord.'

Ibn al-'Arabî wrote about the fallacy of the *imâmis*:

> The looked upon the Pole with the eye of qualification (*ahliya*), looked the *Imâm* of the outward (*zâhir*) with the same eye, no would have ever deviated, which is what the *imâmis* believe about the infallible *Imâm*. For the *Imâm* of the inward (*bâtin*), it is a precondition that he should be infallible, while it is not the for the *Imâm* of the outward, as the station (*maqâm*) of infallibility belongs someone else, which is the source of the *imâmis'* fallacy. us, if he did not desire to be an *Imâm*, but God commanded him to do it, then He will certainly give him infallibility. The Prophet (may God bless him and grant him peace) pointed to what we said through his action of leaving the door for candidates, since he compelled anyone to accept leadership.

> Rather, he [illegible] that good will [illegible] to the one who [illegible] [illegible] from it, while it will [illegible] the source of affliction [illegible] remorse for whosoever seeks it, except for one who upholds justice. The Prophet pointed out the infallibility of one who [illegible] commanded to take leadership when he said: 'The one who is given leadership because he asks for it, will be left [entrusted] with it, while if it comes to [illegible] without asking, God will assign an angel to guide [illegible] through.' That is the meaning of infallibility. Asking for leadership here indicates the pleasure and love for this position, thus he asks for it by his inward, while those who [illegible] and flee from leadership are forced to accept it by [illegible] [illegible] of the community who have the authority to do [illegible] (*ahl al-hall wa al-'aqd*).[28]

The Shaykh (may God be pleased with him) [illegible] the mistake of the *imâmis* in their belief of the infallibility of the *Imâm* when [illegible] wrote:

> The *Imâm* specifically invokes the unity (*al-ahadiyya*). That is why the followers of the infallible *Imâm* (*ashâb al-imâm al-ma'sûm*) believe in his infallibility during [illegible] prayer up until he finishes *salâm*. Because only [illegible] [illegible] who teaches through his action [illegible] forget (*yashw*) the unity (*ahadiyya*) of the One (*wâhid*); he forgets in order to demonstrate to members of the congregation the relevant judgement concerning the one who forgets. This, exclusively, is the role of Prophets, others are followers, merely members of the congregation. Thus as soon as [illegible] *imâm* steps forward to [illegible] the prayer, he becomes infallible. For he is [illegible] [illegible] prophet [illegible] is it his role to demonstrate the relevant judgements. This is how the *imâmis* came [illegible] believe in the infallibility of the *Imâm*, while the reality is [illegible] trary to their belief.[29]

How can it be possible for the Shi'ite scholars, who read and translated Shaykh al-Akbar's books into Persian, to have missed these clear texts? Or how, indeed, could they confirm it?

SHAYKH AL-AKBAR AND THE PHILOSOPHERS

Non-Muslim scholars, in both East and West, have found in Shaykh al-Akbar's writings about considerative (*nazarî*), intelligible (*ma'qûl*) knowledges and wisdom that which [illegible] them to consider him among the most prominent philosophers of the world. In so doing, they overlooked the totally different method of obtaining such knowledges. The philosopher relies on intellect (*'aql*), reflection (*fikr*), and logic (*mantiq*), and considers these faculties to be the source of all his knowledge. On the other hand, Shaykh al-Akbar talks about the Divine effusion (*al-fayd al-ilâhî*), and receiving (*talaqqî*); he speaks unfavourably of reflection, and emphasizes its tendency towards wrong judgements [illegible] right ones. Ibn al-'Arabi calls it an 'affliction' (*balâ'*) that God tested man with:

> God [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] affliction with which [illegible] of His other [illegible] [illegible] afflicted. Through it, either He takes him to felicity [illegible] wretchedness, depending upon how

> He allows him to use it. And that is why so much has been said about the most protected divine [illegible] (*al-janâb al-ilâhî*), and [illegible] many daring and bold [illegible] have [illegible] about God.[30]

The Shaykh adds:

> Reflection is [illegible] state which offers no preservation from [illegible] Hence [illegible] is [illegible] station (*maqâm*) of danger, because [illegible] who experiences such [illegible] never knows whether [illegible] is mistaken [illegible] correct, [illegible] reflection accepts either. If [illegible] reflection to [illegible] mostly [illegible] in knowledge of God, then he [illegible] study each [illegible] of [illegible] Qur'an where reflection (*tafakkur*), [illegible] taking heed (*i'tibâr*) [illegible] mentioned, and never go beyond that unless it is contained in the Book, or in the continuously recurrent tradition (*al-sunna al-mutawâtira*).[31]

We find sufficient evidence relating to this in the discussion that took place when Shaykh Ibn al-'Arabi met with Ibn Rushd.[32]

Among the Muslim scholars who work in the field of Sufism and philosophy, and do [illegible] believe in the Shaykh, there are those who try to show off their knowledge and display their understanding using the Shaykh (may God be pleased with him). They link the Shaykh's writings to those of previous philosophers, such [illegible] Aristotle and Plato. They also imagine an agreement between the Shaykh's beliefs and those of Confucianism, or Zoroastrianism, or Esotericists (*al-bâtiniyya*). They insinuate to the reader that the Shaykh follows the *bâtinî* school of thought. They also claim that he is an *imâm* of the [illegible] sect, despite the fact that the Shaykh [illegible] mentioned the [illegible] sect, though he wrote in detail about the majority of the other sects, such [illegible] al-Barâhima, al-Banawiyya, al-Thânawiyya, al-Hasbâniyya, al-Hashîshiyya, al-Dahriyya, al-Zaydiyya, Sophists, Naturalists, al-Gharaniyya, Physiocrats, al-Mâniyya, al-Mujasima, as well [illegible] the Shi'ites, al-Imâmis, al-Ash'aris and al-Mu'tazilis, when he discussed their thoughts and beliefs and whether he agreed or disagreed with them.

A closer examination of the Shaykh's writings will demonstrate that Ismâ'îlîs did not believe [illegible] trust for any length of time in what he wrote in his books, [illegible] he said:

> [illegible] you who [illegible] considering [illegible] study of this branch of knowledge i.e. sufism (*tasawwuf*), which is the Prophetic knowledge [illegible] is inherited from (the Prophets), may God bless them all, you should not be veiled when you find [illegible] idea, that has been mentioned by [illegible] [illegible] Sufi, also mentioned by a philosopher, [illegible] a *mutakallim*, [illegible] any other thinker, in any branch of knowledge, and [illegible] such a true Sufi of being a philosopher, just because the philosopher spoke about and [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] same idea. And do [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] of copying the philosophers, [illegible] [illegible] that [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] religion, just as the philosopher [illegible] no religion. Refrain from so doing, O my brother, because this is the utterance of the ignorant, for the philosopher's knowledge [illegible] [illegible] false (*bâtil*) in its entirety; it is likely that such [illegible] idea [illegible] part of the true (*haqq*) knowledge that he has, especially if we find that

the Prophet (peace be upon him) has said it. This applies specifically to their writings about wisdom, the abandoning of desires (*shahawât*), the deception of [redacted] (*nafs*), and what it conceals of evil in the hearts. So, if [redacted] do [redacted] know the realities (*haqâ'iq*), then [redacted] should approve of the philosopher's opinion in this particular instance, and [redacted] it is true, because the Prophet (may God bless him and grant him peace) said it, or one of the Companions, [redacted] Malik, [redacted] Shafi'i, or Sufyan al-Thawri. And if you say that the Sufi heard the philosophers say these ideas, or read it in their books, then you might lead yourself into lying and ignorance. Lying, because you say that he heard or read it, when you never saw him do that; ignorance, because you [redacted] differentiate between what [redacted] or [redacted] in this matter. As for your saying that the philosopher has no religion, it [redacted] necessarily follow that all his knowledge is false. This is perceived in the simple intellect (*'aql*) of every intelligent person (*'âqil*). Your objection to the Sufi in this case led you away from knowledge, truth and religion, and [redacted] to the path of the ignorant, the liars and slanderers, those who suffer lack of intellect and religion, and the people of corrupt consideration and deviation."

Ibn al-'Arabi discusses the philosopher's [redacted] about the divine knowledge, and [redacted] the agreement among the folk of God on the prohibition of relying upon reflection as [redacted] means of obtaining such knowledge. He says:

Is there anything [that we can obtain by reflection] that [redacted] cannot reach by unveiling (*kashf*) and finding (*wujûd*)? We say, 'No, nothing', and [redacted] forbid reflection totally, because it passes on deceit and lack of sincerity to its possessor. And there is nothing whose knowledge [redacted] be obtained through unveiling and finding. With us, occupying oneself with reflection is [redacted] veil . . . The meaning of philosopher is lover of wisdom, since *sophia* in Greek is 'wisdom', and *phil* is 'love', so the word [redacted] the 'love of wisdom', and every [redacted] of intelligence loves wisdom. However, the mistakes of the people of reflection in the divine matters (*ilâhiyyât*) are greater than their hitting the mark, whether they are philosophers, Mu'tazilites, Ash'arites, or any other [redacted] of the people of consideration. Therefore, philosophers are [redacted] criticized just because of the [redacted] They are criticized for the mistakes they made in the knowledge of God that contradict what the Messengers (peace be upon them) brought. They did this by judging through consideration, [redacted] the basis of their corrupt reflection, concerning the origin of Prophecy and Messengerhood, and concerning that by which these two [redacted] supported. Hence the issue became confused for them. If, while loving wisdom, they [redacted] sought [redacted] from God, not through reflection, they would have hit the mark in everything. As for the people of consideration among [redacted] Muslims other than the philosophers, such [redacted] the Mu'tazilites and the Ash'arites, Islam had already reached them, and exercised its governance [redacted] them. Then they started to defend it according to what they understood from it. So they hit the mark at the root (*asl*), and mistake [redacted] of the branches (*furû'*), because of [redacted] interpretations (*ta'wîlât*) that they make in accordance with what they [redacted] given by their reflection and rational proofs (*dalîl 'aqlî*). For instance, they hold that if they [redacted] to apply to God the literal meanings of some of [redacted] words of the Lawgiver (*shâri'*), which the proofs of reason (*'aql*) hold [redacted] be impossible, then they

would fall into unbelief (*kufr*). Hence they interpret [redacted] words. They [redacted] know that God has a faculty in some of His servants that gives a judgement different to the [redacted] given by the rational faculty in certain affairs, while it [redacted] with [redacted] in others. This [redacted] a station outside the domain of reason, [redacted] reason [redacted] perceive it [redacted] its own, neither [redacted] reason [man] have faith in it, unless the [redacted] possesses that faculty within him. Then he knows that reason is limited, and that [the existence of such a faculty] is true.[34]

We find that he also says:

The knowledges of the proponents of [redacted] [redacted] the plungers concerning [redacted] [redacted] of God are not lights. There is no school of thought (*madhhab*) which [redacted] not have its leaders to support it; [redacted] themselves they disagree, but they [redacted] [redacted] still described for example as Mu'tazilites or Ash'arites. Likewise are the philosophers in their doctrines about God, [redacted] what ought [redacted] [redacted] believed; they still disagree among themselves but [redacted] group has [redacted] station and one [redacted] . . . And [redacted] [redacted] the Messengers [redacted] Prophets, the early ones and the recent, from the time of Adam up until Muhammad, including all those who [redacted] between [redacted] (may peace and blessing be upon them); they never disagreed (not one) about the roots of their belief in God . . . so cling to the path of faith and performing what God has made obligatory (*fard*) upon you. ' . . . and remember your Lord . . . in the morning and evening' [Q.VII:205) with the remembrance (*dhikr*) that he prescribed in the law (*shar'*) for you, either by the repeating of *La* [redacted] [redacted] *Allâh* (*tahlîl*) or by glorification (*tasbîh*), [redacted] fear God. If the [redacted] (*haqq*) [redacted] to give you whatever [redacted] wishes of His knowledge, make present your intellect and your kernel (*lubb*) to receive what [redacted] gives and bestows upon you of [redacted] knowledge of Him. Surely this [redacted] the useful knowledge and the light by which your heart lives, and walks with you in your world, and with [redacted] you [redacted] safe from the darkness of uncertainty (*shubha*) and doubts (*shûkûk*) which occur in the knowledges produced by reflective thoughts (*afkâr*) . . . I have guided you, my brother, [redacted] to how to [redacted] [redacted] the path of useful knowledge, so if you embark on its straight path, then know that [redacted] has taken you by the hand, looked after you, and has prepared you for Himself. We ask God [redacted] come between us and the might (*sultân*) of our reflective thoughts in what [redacted] [redacted] ordered [redacted] [redacted] reflect upon.[35]

The Shaykh says concerning discarding the judgements of philosophy books:

Prophecy (*nubuwwa*) [redacted] [redacted] earned (*kasb*) without dispute [redacted] the people of unveiling of the folk of God. And if the people of reflection [redacted] the rational thinkers disagree among themselves about it, with us, this [redacted] the strongest proof [redacted] the intelligent person, while using his reflection, can [redacted] the mark or make a mistake; but his mistakes are far greater than [redacted] hitting the mark, since reflection has [redacted] limit [redacted] which it should stop. If it does, inevitably it hits the mark, while if it [redacted] beyond the limits to a domain governed by a different faculty given [redacted] some of the servants, then it may hit the mark or make a mistake. Thus Prophecy [redacted] [redacted] election (*ikhtisâs*) from God the exalted, the purity of which is [redacted] [redacted] by [redacted] turbidity.

Truly Messengership [originates from] the isthmus (*barzakh*)
the one who possesses it needs no intention
Election to it is conditional
[redacted] the Ash'arites have made clear
Nothing is hidden in this truth
[redacted] judgements of philosophy books.[36]

ACQUIRING KNOWLEDGE OF GOD THROUGH GOD-FEARINGNESS (*TAQWA*) AND DIVINE EFFUSION

The Shaykh, may God be pleased with him, says:

The possessor of knowledge through reason, by employing [redacted] reflective consideration in the world, and the possessor of knowledge through spiritual struggle (*mujâhada*) and practice (*a'mâl*), have reached the same result. [redacted] the possessor of practice [redacted] an [redacted] bonus because [redacted] insight (*basîra*) in [redacted] knowledge that cannot [redacted] by uncertainty. While the possessor of knowledge through consideration [redacted] free of uncertainty that [redacted] him in [redacted] proof.[37]

He also says:

Among the different groups (*tawâ'if*) no-one is higher than he who acquired knowledge through God-fearing (*taqwa*), for it is [redacted] the highest level of acquiring knowledge. Hence to him belongs the conclusive judgement; his authority is over that of every other judgement and every judge in every judgement; he is the best of judges. This knowledge is not accessible at the beginning, hence only the people of knowledge among the believers (*mu'minûn*) are elected to acquire it: those who knew that there is One to [redacted] back to, and His witnessing could [redacted] reached. If they [redacted] ignorant of this knowledge, their aspirations (*himma*) would fall short to the extent that, if the [redacted] discloses (*tajâlî*) Himself to them, they would deny Him and reject Him, because in their eyes they believe that God is delimited (*muqayyad*) to something. So long [redacted] this deliniting factor is not present during this disclosure, they will inevitably be [redacted] to deny that [redacted] is God, even if God were to speak to them directly [redacted] they [redacted] able to hear the utterance that He is God. [redacted] their inspiration fell short [redacted] their rational consideration [redacted] them to believe [redacted] the [redacted] – just like the philosophers and the Mu'tazilites – even if [redacted] know about Him; by necessity they have to deny Him in His disclosure to them. It is necessary for the believer (*mû'min*) that the light of his faith (*imân*) gives him what it gave to Moses (peace be upon him) within himself (i.e. made him ask: 'O [redacted] Lord, show [Thyself] to me, that I may look upon Thee').[38]

The Shaykh contradicts the philosophers when they say that God's knowledge does not include knowledge of the particulars. He says:

The philosophers negate God's knowledge of [redacted] the individual [redacted] (*mufradât*)

of creation that take place in the sensory realm. For instance, they say that [redacted] does not know that Zayd, son of 'Amr, moved his finger at noon, or that at [redacted] given time he is wearing a particular garment; but He knows that in creation there is someone who fits that description in [redacted] general absolute way, without any particular designation, because they believe that knowledge of such specific [redacted] belong only to [redacted] sensory, while God is far above (*munazzah*) the [redacted] So they see [redacted] knowledge of [redacted] particular event incorporated in the general universal knowledge; that is to say, in creation there is someone who fits that description, [redacted] for them this form of knowledge is sufficient. In this way the philosophers [redacted] a great deal of knowledge. Now it is certainly possible for [redacted] specific move- [redacted] [of the finger] which was done by that particular individual [Zayd, son of 'Amr] to [redacted] in creation only by a different individual [A, [redacted] of X]; in this instance how would God establish the proof to designate the individual [was it done by Zayd [redacted] A], [redacted] that [redacted] holds him responsible for having done such [redacted] [redacted] in the hereafter, or conversely withhold from him what should be his [reward] in this world? Was [redacted] [redacted] responsible for such [redacted] movement? Among the [redacted] beliefs of those who hold this view is the denial of the sensory (*mahsûsa*) hereafter, and bestowal (*wahb*) in this world, and the reward for the particular individual responsible for [redacted] specific movement. They also believe [redacted] such a move by its essence prevents from happening to the [redacted] who performs it that which the reality of this movement excludes. Their beliefs are [redacted] on a corrupt principle, which is, God [redacted] [redacted] author (*sadar*) except the One, the first, in His unity (*ahadiyya*), then [redacted] tion evolved in [redacted] perpetual process without being qualified by God's knowledge of its particulars; rather only through the universal knowledge that encompasses it."

The Shaykh also disagrees with philosophers about the creation of the spheres (*aflâk*) when he says:

> The ancient philosophers imagined that [redacted] creation of the heavenly spheres took place before [redacted] of the earth, [redacted] that creation went into a downward trend till it [redacted] with the earth. In so believing, they made a tremendous mistake. For this [redacted] [redacted] creation of the Wise (*hakîm*) and the arrangement (*taqdîr*) of [redacted] Mighty, the Knowing (*'azîz 'alîm*). Knowledge of these affairs is dependent upon news that comes through a truthful tongue and incontrovertible knowledge, or through [redacted] establishment of similar knowledge relying on the same qualities. The ancient thinkers [redacted] [redacted] [redacted] to this entire way of acquiring knowledge, [redacted] they employed rational consideration to acquire knowledge that [redacted] [redacted] obtainable through reflection and rational inquiry, hence they made mistakes in all directions."

About the Divine effusion, Ibn al-'Arabi says: 'Light and unveiling, as [redacted] result of the legally prescribed practices which have been laid down by the Real, is not analogous to philosophers' wisdoms, which are the [redacted] clusions of their principles.'[41] He also says:

> God has, on the hearts of some of [redacted] servants, [redacted] divine effusion, during which He bestows on them [redacted] God-given (*ladunnî*) knowledge . . . of the divine effusion that which is beyond the domain of reason . . . The origin for the revealed law

> (*shar'a*), the for it, to bring well-being (*salâh*) into world, the knowledge of that which is not known God of the kind accept perceive on its Hence the revealed books brought down these knowledges, and were uttered on the tongues of the Prophets and Messengers (peace be upon them). Therefore the rational thinkers knew that they lacked tain aspects of the knowledge of which the messengers completed . . . bestowed upon of His servants, such as Prophets and their followers of the Friends (*awliyâ'*) (peace be upon them), a specific (*khass*) knowledge of Him through an elective (*ikhtisâsî*) divine effusion, other than the traditional knowledge is obtainable through study the exertion of effort (*ijtihâd*), which reach through its reflective faculties.[42]

writes about the difference in the spiritual Ascension for the one who follows the revealed law, the who follows consideration:

> The follower of revealed law understands through the knowledge of Adam the specific divine side to every existent thing other than God. This understanding veils him from stopping the of such thing and the for it. the follower of reflection has no access to this knowledge all . . . all that acquired by the possessor of reflection is acquired by the follower of law, vice versa, but the latter exceeds by what he understands through the specific knowledge of the divine side . . . Then they depart on a journey, the Muhammadan upon the wings of solicitude (*'indya*), and the possessor of reflection on the (*burâq*) of reflection, till the gates of the seventh heaven are open before them . . . then the follower will told: O follower of the revealed law, distinguish (*mayz*) the levels (*marâtib*), and know the varied schools of thought, and on a clear sign (*bayyina*) from your Lord in your affairs; do neglect your speech, you neglected nor left in vain; keep your heart like this much-frequented house (*al-bayt al-ma'mûr*) through your presence with the (*haqq*) in every state, and know that nothing can encompass the of all the things that you saw, except the heart of the believer, and that is you. the rational thinker heard this dialogue, he said: 'Ah, is me in that I neglected [my duty] towards God and but among those who mocked.' Then he knew what he missed by not believing in the Prophet not following his way (*sunna*). Then he says: 'Would that I had never taken my reason as a guide, and would I not taken the path to reflection . . .' And the follower exceeds the rational thinker, by the knowledge of affairs that were never, reflected in this world, through the specific divine side that belongs to God in every possible, temporally-originated thing (*muhdath*), which never listed, grasped or imagined. Through this knowledge, the follower is privileged over the rational thinker . . . Then the follower departed seeking Ascension, while his friend the rational thinker detained there, and told: 'Stay here your friend returns; there no room up for you . . .' So he waited there, while the follower continued till he saw the way-stations (*manâzil*) of the travellers (*sâ'irîn*) God the exalted, through the law-prescribed practices.[43]

He also says (may God pleased with him):

> name the One who sends forth (*al-bâ'ith*) is what sends forth to their [the

people of reflection] selves, of thoughts according to which they speak and believe in God; as He sends to their outward selves, the known as Prophets, prophecy and Messengerhood. The intelligent person is who abandons what he knows through faculties concerning God, for what the Messengers brought from God concerning God. what God's Messengers brought conforms to what the of their reflective thoughts brought, so be it, they should God for this agreement. And if disagree- occurs, you have to follow the Messenger of the outward. Beware of the calamity of the of the inward; you will attain felicity, willing. This is advice to every receptive person who possesses a sound intellect.[44]

After this examination of Shaykh Ibn al-'Arabi's writings, would ask: what the connection between Ibn al-'Arabi and the philosophers? Whoever tries to affiliate the Shaykh (may God be pleased with him) with the philosophers, or says that he reports and copies their statements, believed what Shaykh wrote about himself, for he says:

We who report what philosophers (*hukamâ'*) or others say about a given matter; we are not among the people of *taqlîd*, by the praise of God. Rather the affair is believed it to be; from our Lord have witnessed it direct; only report in this book, and in all of our books, what is bestowed upon us through unveiling dictated by the Real, through the divine informing (*ikhbâr*) which is blown into the heart (*ru'*) of the specific side.[45]

SHAYKH AL-AKBAR AND THE ESOTERICISTS (*AL-BATINIYYA*)

Shaykh al-Akbar (may God be pleased with him) says:

can only be one of three types in relation to the revealed law. Either he is a pure esotericist (*bâtinî*), and he is one who believes in the disengagement (*tajrîd*) of God's unity (*tawhîd*). Now this disengagement of God's unity to the suspension of the rulings of law (*ahkâm al-shar'*) – as the esotericists – its deviation away from the that was intended by the law-giver. Whatsoever leads the demolition of legally prescribed religious principle is absolutely censured by every believer. Secondly, he could be a deeply-rooted, totally fixed, pure exoteric (*zâhirî*) to the that leads him to God's corporealization (*tajsîm*) and similarity (*tashbîh*). He, too, joins the pure esotericist in being censured according to the revealed law. The third is follow the law in accordance with what is understood through the language (*al-lisân*), and quently move along with the law-giver wherever he and stop where he stops, step by step; such through which God's love of servants, and eternal felicity, attained.[46]

He says:

Whoever declared his belief in the prophecy, and yet interpreted what it brought of clear rulings to different meanings that come from himself, which were

not intended by the Prophet through what he made clear, and was [redacted] as being what he meant by the majority, shall never accomplish any useful knowledge.[47] And he says about the esotericists generally: 'concerning realities (*haqâ'iq*), they are the most ignorant among people'.[48]

Concerning allusion (*ishâra*), symbol (*ramz*) and enigma (*lughz*), the Shaykh says:

The speech of our companions (may God [redacted] pleased with them), in explaining [redacted] Mighty [redacted] [Qur'an] 'to which falsehood comes not from before it nor from [redacted] it' [Q.XLI:42], is allusions, though it is reality, and a commentary on its [redacted] meanings. These allusions are kept for themselves, while [redacted] general they acknowledge its meanings, and the [redacted] for which it was [redacted] down, [redacted] known by the people of the language in which the book was revealed. Thus, by God, (glory be to Him) the two faces (*wajh*) were combined for them, [redacted] the Exalted said: 'We shall show them Our signs unto the horizons and in themselves' [Q.XLI:53], that is, the verses which are [redacted] down concerning the horizons [redacted] themselves. Every revealed [redacted] has two faces: one which they see [redacted] themselves, [redacted] other they [redacted] outside of themselves. That which they [redacted] [redacted] themselves they call [redacted] allusion, so that the jurist (*faqîh*), the exoteric scholar, [redacted] more accommodating. They do not say that it is [redacted] commentary. In this way they protect themselves against the evil that comes from the jurists, [redacted] their vile accusations of unbelief. The jurists do this because they are ignorant of the modes in which the address (*khitab*) of the [redacted] descends. In so doing, they followed the road of guidance, for God had the power to [redacted] explicitly the interpretations of the folk of God (*ahl Allah*) in His book, yet He did not. He inserted in those divine words, which descend in the language of the common people, the sciences of the meanings of election, which [redacted] [redacted] were [redacted] to understand when He opened for them the eye of understanding that He has provided for them.[49]

Concerning his book, *Al-Isrâ'*, he writes:

I [redacted] symbols (*ramz*), through [redacted] expressions in [redacted] book, [redacted] those meanings, in order that it becomes [redacted] [redacted] vision that can only be understood by the interpreter (*mu'abbir*) who knows its science. Even though others might share, [redacted] listen to the same vision, none of them could know its interpretation except him, and those who run up [redacted] [redacted] stream.[50]

And [redacted] says about his book, *Al-Tanazzulât al-Mûsiliyya*, concerning the five prayers and their secrets:

This is [redacted] book where I inserted the most subtle of secrets, and the lights of the illuminating knowledges. Hence, [redacted] is [redacted] on enigmas and symbols, so that the [redacted] who makes claims (*muddâ'î*) about having intimate dialogues (*munâjâh*) with his Lord, when he [redacted] such results, can fully realize restriction (*hasr*) and incapacity ('*ajz*). I also intended to veil these divine meanings in these enigmatic [redacted] out of jealousy of the esoteric scholars, lest they come to know it, [redacted] [redacted] a punishment for their [redacted] of such knowledge. Just [redacted] God [redacted] [redacted] [redacted] on their hearts, and on their hearing, and put a veil on their eyes, thus they never perceived [redacted] slight [redacted] of the fragrances of Realities, and could not distinguish between two

things even if they were exactly the same. I followed the example of the one who took this knowledge[51] from the infallible Prophet, and said that 'if I spoke about it, they would cut [redacted] throat' - similar to what 'Ali said when [redacted] knew of his death: 'Right here', and he hit his chest with his hand, 'is contained many knowledges, if only I could find [redacted] who desire it.' As his fragrant, the great learned, the exalted son, said:[52]

> O Lord, a jewel of knowledge if I dare to reveal
> I shall be told that I'm an idol worshipper
> Muslim men would permit the shedding of [redacted] blood
> seeing their ugly-doing perfectly
> Those Masters are my guide to these knowledges
> and I followed their example in my veiling of it.[53]

These quotes of Ibn al-'Arabi answer those of the esoteric (*bâtinî*) sect who tried to explain [redacted] Shaykh's allusions [redacted] symbols according to their desire, and through corrupt interpretations, that are far removed from his original intention in the text. They do that in order to imply that the Shaykh follows their school of thought. How remote is the Shaykh's explicit intention from that reached by the [redacted] who claims knowledge and verification (*tahqîq*), and, due [redacted] lack of understanding of what the Shaykh wrote, links him [redacted] the esotericists.

In his [redacted] about the school of thought that believes in transmigration, Shaykh Ibn al-'Arabi wrote:

> The Prophet (may God bless him and grant him peace) said that the soul of the believer is a green bird; this bird is like the human body, a corporeal form that acquired life through that soul, just [redacted] the human body derived its life through it . . . Thus, those who believe in transmigration of the souls slipped into error, when they knew that the Prophets spoke about the transmission of souls into the isthmuseital (*barzakh*) forms - during this state the souls [redacted] the diverse forms of their character traits (*akhlâq*). As they [redacted] these character traits embodied in the animals, they imagined that what the Prophets, [redacted] [redacted] scholars [redacted] said referred [redacted] the animals [redacted] they knew in this world (*dunyâ*); and that it referred to salvation (*takhlîs*), [redacted] [redacted] all that you have already learned of their doctrine. Therefore, they were [redacted] in their [redacted] sideration and interpretations of what the Messengers and the revealed books said concerning that. They [redacted] that one is closest to the state they imagined, transmigration, during sleep, and this became the source of all their claims. Thus they only slipped into error through corrupt interpretation of the [redacted] speech [what the Messengers said], which is the meaning indicated in God's saying that 'He [redacted] try you' [Q.LXVII:2], i.e. [redacted] your rational faculties on life and [redacted] through plunging, and employing reflective consideration, in order that He finds out 'which of you [redacted] best in [redacted] [Q.LXVII:2] who hits the mark, [redacted] who [redacted] [redacted] - [redacted] this case, those who believe in [redacted] transmigration of souls (*ahl al-tanâsukh*).[54]

He also says:

> Therefore a breeze was blown past the people who believe in transmigration of the souls, but they never perceived for certain what [redacted] meant; hence they slipped into error, [redacted] astray [redacted] led astray. Since they considered [redacted] through their reflective thoughts, they missed the right pass and made mistakes. Therefore, they are mistaken but not unbelievers. Except for one who denies raising of the dead (*ba'th*), that is, the second creation, he joins the unbelievers.[55]

It [redacted] rather astonishing [redacted] the esotericists could claim that Shaykh Ibn al-'Arabi belonged [redacted] them, while he portrays them [redacted] the [redacted] ignorant of people about realities, and [redacted] the ones who [redacted] astray and led others astray. And how could [redacted] people of verification (*tahqiq*) [redacted] the learned [redacted] [redacted] from [redacted] explicit texts?

SHAYKH AL-AKBAR AND THE EVIL SCHOLARS OF HIS TIME

Shaykh al-Akbar took [redacted] very hostile stand against the evil scholars of law (*fiqh*) and sufism who lived during his time. In his criticism of the scholars of law, who desire the taking of judiciary, testimonial, fiscal and teaching positions, he wrote:

> Beware, my brother, may God protect you from low opinion, [redacted] to believe [redacted] I criticize the scholars of law merely because they are scholars, or [redacted] they studied the law; no [redacted] should have such [redacted] opinion of [redacted] Muslim, especially since the nobility of *fiqh*, and the science of the revealed law, is not [redacted] secret. But I only criticize those among the scholars of law (*fuqahâ'*) who voraciously struggle [redacted] themselves [redacted] attain this world; who acquired *fiqh* only for showing-off (*riyâ'*) and reputation (*sum'a*), and by their knowledge seek people's acclaim and approval, and persist in disputation (*jidâl*) and controversies; and who continuously disapprove of the [redacted] of the hereafter, upon whom through God-fearing (*taqwa*) He bestowed a God-given (*ladunnî*) knowledge. Hence I do [redacted] dispute [redacted] high rank of *fiqh*, for I heard that the Prophet, [redacted] God bless him and grant him peace, said: 'Whosoever God desires good for, He gives him *fiqh* [redacted] the religion.' But I only meant those [redacted] the scholars of law who have been overpowered by their [redacted] (*nafs*) and passions (*shahawât*), completely controlled by Satan, and through their hands harm came to the friends of God (*awliyâ'*); and through their own passions they destroyed themselves.
>
> I have also criticized the Sufis; nevertheless, I did [redacted] [redacted] the truthful (*al-sâdiqûn*). I only [redacted] the type who outwardly [redacted] the people dressed themselves in the sufi's garment, while with God their inward (*bâtin*) was different. God the most high said: 'There is the type of people whose speech about [redacted] world's [redacted] may dazzle you, and he calls God to witness what is in his heart; yet is [redacted] the [redacted] contentious of enemies' [Q.II:204]. Hence my criticism of sufism is directed [redacted] the type of Sufis that I mentioned. Those who claim incarnation (*hulûliyya*) and libertinism (*ibâhiyya*) [redacted] other similar [redacted] originated [redacted] way. They were distinguished by outward showing-off and claims; they [redacted] [redacted] companions of Satan and the allies of loss.[56]

It is no wonder that many of the exoteric scholars (*'ulamâ' al-rusûm*) and other groups were hostile to the Shaykh, while the pleased with him, during his life and after his death. They attributed to him the doctrine of Union (*ittihâd*), then accused him of differentiating between the temporally originated (*hadîth*) and the eternal (*qadîm*), and that he believes in the unity of existence (*wahdat al-wujûd*) in accordance with what is understood by the corrupt thoughts of the earlier scholars who believed in this doctrine, in addition to everything they interpolated and distorted of his writings. If the scholars could verify what the Shaykh said and wrote with his own hands, to be opposed to all that is attributed to him, then, definitely, they would become certain of his innocence of all that his enemies accuse him of, either due to lack of understanding, or because of additions that were interjected in his writings. He writes about union: 'The Lord is Lord, and the servant is servant; they do not blunder or associate.'[57] He also says: 'The servant is he who has no aspect (*wajh*) of Lordship, and the Lord is He who has no aspect of servanthood; hence the Lord is the Lord and the servant is the servant.'[58] He further adds: 'The existence that has been given preponderance (*tarjîh*) is not equal to the intrinsic existence for which preponderance is not an attribute.'[59]

In his description of the cosmos he wrote:

> Know that the cosmos consists of everything other than God. It is none other than the possible things, whether they existed or not. For by their essence they are a mark to indicate His knowledge, or the knowledge of the Necessary Being (*wâjib al-wujûd*) by His Essence; and that is God. Hence possibility is a necessary property for the possible things in both states of their non-existence and existence. Rather it is intrinsic for them, since preponderation is necessary for them . . . So the cosmos, if you look upon its reality, you will find that it is nothing except a vanishing accident (*'arad-zâ'il*), that is to say the governing rule of it is its fleetingness (*zawâl*). That is the meaning of His saying: 'Everything is annihilated except His face' [Q.XXVIII:22]. The Prophet, may God bless him and grant him peace, said: 'The truest line the Arabs said is the line of Labid, surely everything other than God is unreal.' He meant that other than God has no reality of its own to sustain it, for it only exists through other than itself.[60]

He wrote: 'Everything other than God is temporally originated and then came into being.'[61] He also said: 'The Eternal is the Lord and the temporally originated is the servant.'[62] To refute their claim that the Shaykh believes in union, here are his own words to suffice: 'No-one believes in union except the heretics;'[63] 'He who has refined character traits cannot believe in union.'[64]

> Speak not of our union (*ittihâd*)
> as the formation (*nash'a*) will prove you're lying[65]

If you say in the meaning (*ma'nâ*) we are united
that is the evidence of our need[66]

Union is impossible none can believe in it except
the ignorant of Him who lost his reason[67]

Do not link me to union with the Solitary One
for He is the Master and I am the servant[68]

What the Shaykh [redacted] by union (*ittihâd*) is made clear when he [redacted]

The station of Union (*ittihâd*) is when the [redacted] is obscured (*iltibâs*) in [redacted] attribute of God, but if it [redacted] meant, then it is the obscurity of God in an attribute of [redacted] servant.'[69]

An example of this is when we attribute 'fasting' to the fasting servant, while in reality 'fasting' is an attribute that belongs to the Real, since the Exalted said in the holy report (*hadîth qudsî*): 'Fasting belongs to Me and I reward for it.' On the other hand, [redacted] similarly attribute hand, eye, laughter, haste, smiling, and so on, to the servant, and yet [redacted] find that the Real, glory [redacted] to Him, used these same attributes to describe Himself.

ONENESS OF BEING (*WAHDAT AL-WUJUD*)[70]

The Oneness of being as understood by the Shaykh, may God be pleased with him, [redacted] in [redacted] to that of philosophers and the followers of the different schools of thought. [redacted] is based [redacted] the distinction between the Necessary Being (*wâjib al-wujûd*) through Itself, and the existent thing (*mawjûd*) through other than itself: these are the possible things (*mumkinât*). This possible thing, in its temporally originated (*hadîth*) state of existence, is not outside the rank of being [redacted] 'possibility' (*imkân*), whose relationship to existence and non-existence is equal. This is different in the case of the Necessary Being, and He is the Real [redacted] which non-existence ('*adam*) cannot be attributed. The Real Being (*al-wujûd al-haqq*) belongs to God the exalted, while the possible thing, the temporally originated, did not exist, then [redacted] into existence as if it is nothing. On the other hand, 'Being' (*wujûd*) is an attribute, while 'Existent' (*mawjûd*) is [redacted] ('*ayn*). To speak about the Oneness of Being (*wahdat al-wujûd*) is to say that the attribute, Being, is the [redacted] of the prescribed (existent) – in other words, that is to say, Being is the essence of the Existent – which can only be said about the Existent Being, i.e. God, the Real, glory [redacted] Him, since [redacted] is One (*ahadî*) in His [redacted] attributes such as life (*hayâ*), knowledge ('*ilm*), power (*qudra*), [redacted] all other attributes. As for the created, the temporally originated, his attributes are not the [redacted] of the prescribed existent. For [redacted] essence could subsist (*baqâ'*), while the attribute vanishes (*zâl*); [redacted] the attribute

(*sifa*) might [redacted] in [redacted] meaning (*ma'nâ*), while [redacted] prescribed (*mawsûf*), the temporally originated, [redacted] existent essence. Just [redacted] the attribute is [redacted] meaning and definition, yet differs in relation to what it describes, so [redacted] existence one in its meaning, but differs in limit and reality in relation to the Eternal (*qadîm*) or the temporally originated (*hadîth*). The Oneness of Being by definition means that subsistence (*baqâ'*) belongs [redacted] God alone, while the possible thing, [redacted] in its [redacted] of existence, is [redacted] vanishing shadow (*zill zâ'il*), [redacted] inclining accident (*'arad mâ'il*). If we are to look upon the possible existence from the point that it has [redacted] beginning and no end, [redacted] shall find that it emerges and [redacted] into being in accordance with its form (*sûra*) in God's knowledge. God is [redacted] qualified in the knowledge of it through [redacted] knowledge that [redacted] not exist before. Hence the possible existence – from the beginning [redacted] infinity – exists in the divine knowledge in [redacted] manner analogous to the way images exist in a mirror. The Shaykh employs two separate terms to differentiate [redacted] possible things (*mumkinât*): he uses the term 'immutable entity' (*'ayn thâbita*) to refer to it while still in the divine knowledge, and 'existent entity' (*'ayn mawjûd*) to designate it after having been created (*khalq*) and brought into existence (*ijâd*). As [redacted] have explained earlier, God's knowledge is His essence, for [redacted] is [redacted] in His [redacted] and attributes. Hence the expression Oneness of Being [redacted] used while the creation remained to be [redacted] [redacted] shadow (*khayâl*) that cannot be fixed.

Those who criticized the Shaykh were confused, since they could not differentiate between the Oneness of Being (*wahdat al-wujûd*), and the Oneness of the existent (*wahdat al-mawjûd*). The Shaykh's authority in what he said is God's word: 'Everything is annihilated except His face', and what the Messenger of God, may God bless him and grant him peace, said: 'The [redacted] [redacted] the Arabs have said is Labid's line: "Is [redacted] everything other than God unreal (*bâtil*)"; and his saying: 'God is and nothing is with Him.' This [redacted] is discussed in detail [redacted] my other work *Sharh Kalimât al-Sûfiya*, a commentary on [redacted] terminology. The reader will find that whosoever tries [redacted] clarify what the Shaykh, may God sanctify his secret, [redacted] about the Oneness of Being, always ends up making it [redacted] obscure, and had he left the Shaykh's own words [redacted] explicit as he wrote them, the matter would never have been confused by any of the people of knowledge.

SHAYKH AL-AKBAR AND RELIGIONS

Among [redacted] orientalists and non-Muslim writers [redacted] find those who try [redacted] portray Shaykh al-Akbar as [redacted] common denominator [redacted] factor of both the revealed [redacted] non-revealed religions. As if [redacted] [redacted] the Joker of

playing cards, for [redacted] is a believer in each [redacted] every religion. It [redacted] their [redacted] understanding of what he wrote in the *Tarjumân al-Ashwâq* that led them to such belief, for [redacted] said:

> My heart has become capable of accepting every form
> a pasture for gazelles and a monastery for monks
> a temple for idols and a pilgrim's Ka'ba
> [redacted] for the Torah and the book of the Qur'an
> I follow the religion of love wherever its mounts lead
> this is [redacted] religion and my faith[71]

Those who read these lines, without reading the Shaykh's commentary, took them to indicate a different meaning, contrary to what he originally intended. In so doing they neither accepted the Shaykh's explanation in the same book, nor tried to understand what he meant through reading his other works. The [redacted] behind such misunderstanding is their confusing between the divine self-disclosure in the forms of beliefs, i.e. witness of the [redacted] in the form of every belief[72] – which is what these lines [redacted] – [redacted] the object of belief, which the [redacted] orders the [redacted] to follow [redacted] the tongues of His Messengers. For the self-disclosure in the forms of beliefs refers to the One disclosing Himself, and He is the Real exalted and glorified, while the object of belief refers to the [redacted] who is obliged [redacted] believe in God in accordance with what [redacted] was ordered on the tongue of the Prophet, which is found in the revealed law.

The closeat example to it is our belief that God is the [redacted] of everything, this includes all the acts (*af'âl*) of the servant; nevertheless, the servant is responsible for his wrong actions, and all evils that originate from him, and, equally, he is rewarded for all good that [redacted] from him and [redacted] his hands. So what they imagined is the result of their incorrect understanding of the Shaykh's commentary on what God the exalted said: 'Your Lord has decreed that you worship none but Him' [Q.XVII:23]. For the Shaykh 'decreed' here [redacted] ordainment, not [redacted] commandment.

In the [redacted] way they erroneously understood the Shaykh when he said: 'None is worshipped other than God, even those who associate others with God worship [redacted] but God in the very objects of worship that they name [redacted] associates.'[73] They isolated such [redacted] statement, which [redacted] supported by what the Real [redacted] about those who associate others with God, when they admit: 'We only worship them in order that they may bring [redacted] nigh in nearness to God' [Q.XXXIX:3), instead of linking it to what he wrote about the importance of closely adhering [redacted] the revealed law. They also [redacted] [redacted] pay attention to what the Shaykh, may God [redacted] pleased with him, said:

> He who prostrates himself to other than God, by God's command, seeking [redacted] to God [redacted] obeying God, will be felicitous [redacted] attain deliverance; [redacted]

> he who prostrates himself to other than God, without God's command, seeking [redacted] will be wretched.[74]

Another cause for the mistake, of those who speak about the universality of the Shaykh in [redacted] belief, [redacted] from over-emphasizing his words: 'Mercy [redacted] all-encompassing and punishment is not eternal.'[75] Again, they paid no attention [redacted] his other [redacted]

> Torment and [redacted] sensory torture by fire, the burning of flesh, the biting of serpents and scorpions, and all other types of sensory and suprasensory punishment, will continue for [redacted] period which he estimates to last fifty thousand years that are equal [redacted] the years of this world.[76]

They [redacted] unable [redacted] comprehend what he [redacted] when he said that the form of punishment is everlasting and [redacted] changes, [redacted] after the end of the duration of punishment, and [redacted] encompassing of mercy to the people of wretchedness; for God the exalted will configure the people of the fire – those who belong to it and shall never come out of it – on a temperament through which they will enjoy that by which they were tormented. Could we find an intelligent person who would hope to enjoy stench, pus and the burning of flesh, and abandons delight in the gardens with the beautiful companions, beauty in the [redacted] of sheer pleasure, that is, paradise, the abode of the felicitous ones?

About the Jews specifically the Shaykh [redacted] in his commentary [redacted] the story of Mary, when she pointed to Jesus, peace be upon him, as she brought him to her folk: 'Mary, [redacted] [redacted] upon her, resorted to *ishâra* because of the people of calumny and heresy (*ahl al-ifk wa'l ilhâd*).'[77]

He also wrote about them in connection with the interpretation of the Qur'an:

> One should never venture to interpret the speech of God according to the [redacted] of these tremendously corrupted stories, [redacted] the story of Yusuf, Dawud [redacted] [redacted] Prophets, [redacted] [redacted] be upon them, and also Muhammad, may God bless him and grant him [redacted] as they are only [redacted] on corrupt interpretations, [redacted] dubious sources, related by people who [redacted] about God that which [redacted] mentions in His book.[78]

So, if the [redacted] who teaches people repeats such stories in his circle, [redacted] angels would [redacted] him, depart from his circle, and [redacted] will incur the wrath of God. If his circle is attended by [redacted] whose belief is not complete, [redacted] will find in such stories [redacted] license (*rukhsa*) that he can rely upon in his disobedience, claiming: 'If the Prophets committed such [redacted] [as the stories narrate] who could I be in relation [redacted] them? By God, far [redacted] it from what the accursed Jews attributed to the Prophets.'[79]

About [redacted] Jews and the Christians in reference to Jesus, [redacted] be upon him, he wrote:

> He [redacted] himself in the three [redacted] referring to the [redacted] in the Qur'an when God, on the tongue of Jesus the son of Mary, says: 'So peace is on me the day

> I was born, the day that I die, and the day that I shall be raised up to life again' [Q.XIX:33]. God the high incomparability (*tanzih*), above the misguiding utterances of the people of misguidance, when the verse 'Such [was] Jesus son of Mary: [it a of truth about they [vainly] dispute [Q.XIX:34].[80]

In these passages we see the Shaykh calling the Jews and the Christians the people of calumny, heresy misguidance.

There is doubt that those who imagine that Shaykh al-Akbar believes and propagates the doctrine of the unity of religions have never read his writings on *jihâd*, or call to fight against the unbelievers.[81] They have also read his letters to both Sultan 'Izz al-din Kay Kaus[82] al-Nur Ibn al-Rashid,[83] for if what they have imagined was true, no meaning would be left for unbelief (*kufr*), faith (*imân*), the Garden, the Hellfire, felicity and wretchedness. While the Shaykh, may God be pleased with him, confirms that the people of hellfire are of four categories, the second category is that of the associators (*al-mushrikûn*), those who associate others with God, the third category made up of atheists (*al-mu'attila*), those who completely deny divinity and say that this universe has no God.[84]

SHAYKH AL-AKBAR AND THE VERIFIERS (*AL-MUHAQQIQIN*)

As for the Sufis and the folk of the path of God, they considered the Shaykh, may God be pleased with him, to be the Shaykh of the Verifiers (*al-muhaqqiqîn*), and the leader (*imâm*) of the people of unveiling and finding (*ahl al-kashf wa-l wujûd*). They trusted that God elected him and bestowed upon him the rank of being the seal of the elect Muhammadan sainthood (*khatm al-walâya al-muhammadiyya al-khâssa*). This election does not necessarily imply superiority, the Muhammadan seal only applies to the saints (*awliyâ'*), not to the Prophets:

> He is the highest among creation in knowledge of God, thus no-one during or after his time attains higher knowledge of God . . . and of the decree than him. other saint (*walî*) after him shall be on the heart of Muhammad, and none after him, except returns [refers] to him.'[85]

The Shaykh criticized those who came before him of Prophets, Messengers and Saints.

Among the Sufis, Shaykh al-Akbar is considered the reference to sciences of tasting (*adhwâq*) and Divinity (*ilâhiyyât*), he is one of those who attained the station of nearness (*qurba*) to God, possessed the station of belovedness (*mahbûbiyya*), realized the station of servitude (*'ubûda al-mahda*), met the ranks (*tabaqât*) of Saints in their various

levels (*marâtib*), and worshipped God the exalted according to the [redacted] of virtue (*ihsân*). This [redacted] verified by what he dictated of sciences (*'ulûm*) [redacted] knowledges (*ma'ârif*), that has no parallel, either before him [redacted] after him to the present time.[86]

SHAYKH AL-AKBAR'S WAYFARING (*SULUK*) AND THE PATH OF KNOWLEDGE (*MA'RIFA*)

The Shaykh, may God be pleased with him, says that the knowledges that God the exalted [redacted] him through opening [redacted] the direct result of 'our following of the Prophet's tradition (*sunna*), may God [redacted] him and grant him peace, and that which [redacted] prescribed (*shurî'a*) for [redacted] Never [redacted] any point [redacted] [redacted] deviate from it, [redacted] did [redacted] ever commit [redacted] disobedience through making lawful that which God decreed unlawful, or vice versa.'[87] This [redacted] because:

> There [redacted] slaves of God who acted according [redacted] their faith (*imân*), and were truthful in their [redacted] (*ahwâl*); hence God opened the eyes of their insights (*basîra*) and disclosed Himself to their inmost consciousness (*sirr*), [redacted] that their knowledge of Him is by direct witnessing (*shuhûd*), and in their knowledge they are [redacted] insight and [redacted] clear proof from within themselves. [redacted] cling to the worship of God as prescribed in the revealed law and communicated by transmission (*sam'*).[88]

> Deliverance (*najât*) is desired by all souls and by people of all creeds; it is beloved by all, yet, because of their ignorance, they lost the path leading to it. If the one [redacted] fault knew of his error, he wouldn't insist on it.[89]

Therefore, [redacted] find that the Shaykh, may God be pleased with him, calls for the adherence of the revealed law, both outwardly and inwardly since in all of his writings he always [redacted] that God the exalted addressed [redacted] in his totality.[90] He also declares that the revealed law is the white proof (*al-mahaja al-baydâ'*), the proof of the felicitous ones, and the path of felicity; whoever embarks upon it attains deliverance, and whoever deviates perishes.[91] He repeatedly approves of what is prescribed by the law (*taklîf*), and insists that no [redacted] is exempted from it. He says:

> [redacted] becomes generally prohibited through the divine address for a single person becomes incumbent [redacted] all those for [redacted] the law is prescribed (*mukalafîn*) without exclusion. If anyone claims that such an exclusion is permitted, even only to a single person, [redacted] should [redacted] enough [redacted] outwardly make him blameworthy, considered by [redacted] [redacted] unbeliever (*kâfir*), in [redacted] to [redacted] fact [redacted] be [redacted] lying in his claim.[92]

His path to God, may God be pleased with him, [redacted] clear and with no obscurities:

> The path is the obligatory rituals prescribed by the Real, about the strict application (*'azîma*) of which there [illegible] relaxation (*rukhsa*), such relaxations in the application of the law (*rukhas*) are valid only at the prescribed places.[93]

[illegible] further:

> We have [illegible] path to God except through [illegible] which [illegible] prescribed; whosoever claims [illegible] there exists [illegible] path to God other than [illegible] prescribed, [illegible] is false. A Shaykh who has no courtesy (*adab*) is not to be taken as [illegible] guide, even if he was sincere in his [illegible] (*hâl*).[94]

Whoever therein claims that [illegible] follows Shaykh al-Akbar, [illegible] believes in him, yet does not ascribe [illegible] the path that [illegible] stated, then his claim [illegible] untrue and his actions [illegible] in vain. The [illegible] who tries to reach the knowledge pertaining [illegible] tasting (*al-ma'rifa al-dhawqiya*), which the Shaykh laid down in his writings, through reflection, philosophical study [illegible] through performing some rituals, such [illegible] the repetition of some *awrâd* [illegible] the like, without applying Islam to all the different aspects of life, whether it is to do with worship or life transactions, inwardly and outwardly, in knowledge and practice, he is like the one who cloaked himself in false robes, and he is in no way connected [illegible] the Shaykh. He [illegible] [illegible] the Shaykh when he said: 'Whoever seeks the knowledge of the affairs by [illegible] of irrelevant proofs (*dalâ'il gharîba*), which is [illegible] the prescribed thing, he [illegible] not possibly attain any reward (*tâ'il*), and failure is his sole achievement.'[95] Equally, he did not believe him when he said: 'We have gained the witnessing only through prophetic emulation and following.'[96] The Shaykh also wrote: 'If a person wants the knowledge of realities, let him follow the path of Men.'[97]

SUMMARY

We can conclude that Shaykh al-Akbar, Muhyiddin Ibn al-'Arabi, is [illegible] leader (*imâm*), Muslim, Traditionalist (*salafî*), Jurist (*usûlî*) and a Sufi. By Imam Muslim, we mean that he is a Jurist (*faqîh*), founder of his own independent school of law (*madhhab*), and one of the leaders (*imâms*) of the people of the tradition and community (*ahl al-sunna wa-l jamâ'a*). By Traditionalist (*salafî*) we [illegible] that [illegible] is a follower (*muttabi'*) [illegible] an innovator (*mubtad'*). By Jurist (*usulî*) [illegible] mean that [illegible] used exactly the same principles of the book, tradition and [illegible] (*kitâb wa-l* [illegible] *wa-l ijmâ'*) that the *imâms* have agreed upon in Jurisprudence. By Sufi [illegible] [illegible] that he is [illegible] Muhammadan inheritor who possessed a great portion of noble character traits (*makârim al-akhlâq*). Shaykh Ibn al-'Arabi, may God be pleased with him, is a Muhammadan mirror of the utmost clarity, symmetry and straightness; whoever looks

at him only [redacted] himself, and whoever speaks about him, only says [redacted] which indicates the speaker himself.

NOTES

1. Ibn al-'Arabi, *al-Diwân*, p. 47.
2. Ibn al-'Arabi, *al-Futûhât al-Makkiyya*, al-Mimaniyya edn, Cairo, 1274 H; 1293 H; [redacted] H. [redacted] vols, II, p. 163.
3. *Fut.*, IV, p. [redacted]
4. Ibid., p. [redacted]
5. *Fut.*, I, p. 355.
6. Ibid., p. 534.
7. *Fut.*, II, pp. [redacted] and 163; III, p. 230.
8. *Fut.*, I, p. 344.
9. Referring to the Quranic [redacted] 'So [redacted] God, for it is God that teaches you'. (Q.II:282).
10. *Fut.*, III, p. 370.
11. *Fut.*, I, p. 698.
12. Ibn Taymiyya, [redacted] *al-Manâsik*, [redacted] al-Manâr, [redacted] H.
13. *Fut.*, III, p. 563.
14. *Fut.*, II, p. 252; IV, pp. 142 and 491.
15. *Fut.*, III, p. 323; IV, pp. 77 and 82.
16. *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, [redacted]
17. *Mudd* is a dry measure of weight used by the people of Medina.
18. Ibn al-'Arabi, *Rasâ'il, Kitâb al-Qurba.*
19. *Fut.*, I, p. 518.
20. *Fut.*, III, p. 16.
21. Ibid., p. 16.
22. *Fut.*, III. p. 372.
23. Ibid., III, p. 137.
24. Ibn al-'Arabi, *Rûh al-Quds fî* [redacted] *al-Nafs.*
25. *Fut.*, IV, p. [redacted]
26. Ibn al-'Arabi, *al-Diwân*, p. 460.
27. *Fut.*, I, p. [redacted]
28. *Fut.*, III, p. 138.
29. *Fut.*, III, p. 194.
30. *Fut.*, I, [redacted] 125–6.
31. *Fut.*, II, p. 230.
32. *Fut.*, I, [redacted] 153 and 324; see also my book *Life of Shaykh al-Akbar.*
33. *Fut.*, I, p. 32.
34. *Fut.*, II, p. 523.
35. *Fut.*, III, p. 82.
36. *Fut.*, II, p. 595.
37. *Fut.*, I, p. 372.
38. *Fut.*, III, p. 401; 'The Light of Faith (*imân*) [redacted] Musa, may Peace be upon him, the strength [redacted] "O my Lord! Show (Thyself) [redacted] me."' (Q.VII:143).

39. *Fut.*, III, p. 536.
40. Ibn al-'Arabi, *'Uqlat al-Mustawfiz*, p. 76.
41. Ibn al-'Arabi, *Dhakhâ'ir al-A'lâq*.
42. *Fut.*, I, p. 324.
43. *Fut.*, II, pp. 273–83.
44. *Fut.*, IV, p. 279.
45. *Fut.*, II, p. 432; III, p. 352.
46. *Fut.*, II, p. 240.
47. *Fut.*, III, p. 323.
48. Ibid., p. 373.
49. *Fut.*, I, p. 279.
50. [illegible] al-'Arabi, [illegible] *al-Najât*, in the introduction.
51. Referring to Abu Hurayra, the Companion.
52. Imâm Zin al-'abidin 'Ali bin al-Husayn, may God [illegible] pleased with him.
53. Ibn al-'Arabi, *al-Tanazzulât al-Mûsiliyya*, Dâr al-Fikr al-'Arabi, Chapter One.
54. *Fut.*, III, p. 66.
55. *Fut.*, I, p. 755.
56. [illegible] al-'Arabi, [illegible] *al-Quds fî* [illegible] *al-Nafs*.
57. *Fut.*, III, p. 224.
58. Ibid., p. 318.
59. Ibid., p. 397.
60. Ibid., p. 443.
61. Ibid., p. 506.
62. *Fut.*, IV, p. 438.
63. Ibid., p. 372.
64. *Fut.*, II, p. 317.
65. *Fut.*, IV, p. 187.
66. Ibn al-'Arabi, *al-Tanazzulât al-Mûsiliyya*, Chapter Two.
67. Ibn al-'Arabi, *al-Diwân*, p. 441.
68. Ibn al-'Arabi, [illegible] *al-Isrâ'*, *Munâjât al-Adab*.
69. *Fut.*, I, p. [illegible]
70. Ibid., pp. 52, 90, 175, 550, 602, 633, 703 [illegible] 707; II, pp. 38, 54, 55, 70, 166, 167, 216, 309, 311, 426, 459, 483, 484, 502, 505, 516, 519, 587; III, pp. 46, 78, 80, 313, 379 and 456; IV, pp. 6, 40, 81, 100, 107, 141, 316 and 427; *al-Diwân*, pp. 218 and 377.
71. [illegible] al-'Arabi, *Tarjumân al-Ashwâq*, 1313 H. edn, and 1388 H. edn; [illegible] *Muhâdarat al-Abrâr wa Musâmarât al-Akhyar*, 1906 and [illegible] edn; I found that all those who referred to this line of poetry substituted the word [illegible] (religion) for the word *hubb* (love) which is contrary to the text and changes the meaning.
72. *Fut.*, I, pp. 238, [illegible] and 589; II, pp. 92, [illegible] and 498; IV, pp. 100, 101, 165, [illegible] and 415.
73. *Fut.*, II, p. [illegible]
74. *Fut.*, III, p. 367.
75. *Fut.*, II, pp. 148, 244 and 662; III, pp. 25, 100, 101, 383, 446 and 496; IV, pp. [illegible] and 163.
76. *Fut.*, III, p. 383.
77. *Fut.*, I, p. 279.
78. Indicating the Quranic verse 'God hath heard the [illegible] of those who say: "Truly,

[redacted] indigent and [redacted] rich" ', Q.III:181.
79. *Fut.*, II, p. [redacted]
80. Ibn al-'Arabi, *al-Tanazzulāt al-Mūsiliyya*, p. 172.
81. [redacted] al-'Arabi, *Fut.*, IV, p. 470; *Ijāz al-Bayān fī-Tarjama 'an al-Qur'an*, 'Fight in the [redacted] of Allah', Q.II:190.
82. *Fut.*, IV, p. 533.
83. [redacted] al-'Arabi, *al-Mushāhadāt*, II.
84. *Fut.*, I, p. 301.
85. *Fut.*, II, pp. [redacted] and 339.
86. [redacted] *Life of Shaykh al-Akbar*.
87. *Fut.*, I, p. 201.
88. *Fut.*, III, p. 311.
89. [redacted] al-'Arabi, [redacted] *fī al-A'lāq*.
90. *Fut.*, I, pp. 334 and 338; he [redacted] both inwardly [redacted] outwardly.
91. *Fut.*, III, p. 69.
92. Ibid., p. 559.
93. *Fut.*, II, p. 133.
94. Ibid., p. [redacted]
95. *Fut.*, III, p. [redacted]
96. Ibid., p. [redacted]
97. *Fut.*, I, p. [redacted]

Adab and Revelation or One of the Foundations of the Hermeneutics of Ibn 'Arabi

DENIS GRIL

Recent studies of the work of the Shaykh al-Akbar have been bringing more and more clearly [illegible] light the fact that his doctrine is rooted in the Qur'an and the Sunna.[1] His major, and sometimes minor, works demonstrate by their [illegible] of exposition, and sometimes by their structure, links obvious and subtle with the text of Revelation.[2] Rigorous respect for the letter of the Qur'an and the prophetic model on the one hand, and unlimited [illegible] of Reality on the other, must balance. Moreover, the Book which came down to [illegible] speaks to him in [illegible] of transcendence and of likeness; it distinguishes the [illegible] Lord, while calling [illegible] back [illegible] the Unique One. Only the heart, receptacle of the Divine Word, [illegible] unite all these aspects. Do we not find, in the middle of those [illegible] Revelation announcing Its principle, intermediary, and the [illegible] to whom it is sent, the [illegible] and the ancient form:

> This is the descent (*tanzil*) brought about by the Lord of the worlds. The Faithful Spirit brought it down. Upon your heart so that you might be among the Warriors. In [illegible] clear Arabic tongue. And it is found in the writings of [illegible] Ancients. (Qur'an 26:192–6)

The heart of the Seal of the Prophets (upon him may grace and peace descend), and him alone, is endowed with such comprehension and comprehensiveness. Receptivity to the Word, then, exerts an action of balancing, and consequently inspires the right attitude in any situation, whether it be a [illegible] of doctrine, path of initiation, religious practice or of comportment towards any being whatsoever. Arab and Islamic tradition [illegible] this attitude by the [illegible] '*adab*'.[3] There is then nothing surprising in the fact that it often [illegible] in the writings of the Shaykh al-Akbar. But, while the classical literature of *tasawwuf* makes rather more [illegible] of the [illegible] express the quality of the attitude which it should be observed in respect of God, or in relation between master and disciples (*adab al-subha*), Ibn 'Arabi places it on the level of doctrine. [illegible] particularly insists on respect, as he himself states it, for the prophetic and Quranic message, and *adab* towards the [illegible] quickly becomes, as [illegible] shall try to show, one of the keys to his understanding.

ADAB: DEFINITION AND CLASSIFICATION

'The *adîb* – the one who knows and respects *adab* – is the wise man (*hakîm*).' This [illegible] begins Chapter 168 of the *Futûhât al-Makkiyyah* [illegible] the *maqâm* of *adab*. In the Qur'an, the teaching of wisdom (*hikma*) often [illegible] along with the revelation of the Book. Ibn 'Arabi, for his part, gives [illegible] definition and classification of *adab* which underlines his close relations with the Qur'an:

> Know – and may God assist you – that God says, 'And He is with you wherever you [illegible] be' (Qur'an 57:4). Thus the *adîb* is with everyone by [illegible] capacity which he [illegible] [illegible] embrace all things.[4] He comports himself with [illegible] spiritual station according to the station; with each state, according to [illegible] state, [illegible] in the same [illegible] for each virtue and aim. The *adîb* unites in himself the Noble Virtues (*makârim al-akhlâq*); he knows the ignoble [illegible] without qualifying himself by them. [illegible] embraces [illegible] degrees of praiseworthy and blameworthy knowledge, for there is nothing, knowledge of which is not preferable [illegible] ignorance for any man endowed with intelligence. *Adab*, then, is [illegible] bringing together of Good [*jimâ' al-khayr*].

Ibn 'Arabi goes on to distinguish four kinds of *adab*:

Adab [illegible] the Law (*adab al-shar'a*): 'The divine *adab* which God undertakes to teach by revelation and inspiration. By it, he formed (*addaba*) His Prophet (grace and peace be upon him) and by it, the Prophet formed us. We then [illegible] the "formed formers" (*al-mu'addabun al-mu'addibûn*). The Messenger of God – upon Him grace and peace – said: "God instilled *adab* in me, and brought it to perfection in me" (*Inna 'llâha addabanî fa-ahsana adabî*).'[5]

Adab [illegible] Service (*adab al-khidma*) draws for its model [illegible] royal etiquette. 'Now, the king of the [illegible] of God is God Himself, Who instituted for [illegible] the varying modes of *adab* for His service . . .' It is then [illegible] matter of [illegible] particular aspect of the *adab* of the law, inasmuch as the law governs all forms of relations of man and God (*mu'âmalâtunâ iyyâhu*).

[illegible] of 'Right' (*adab al-haqq*) proceeds from [illegible] Quranic notion of *haqq*, which may translate as right, duty, justice, true thing [illegible] truth; [illegible] Divine Name, it means 'The True One'.[6] Ibn 'Arabi refers [illegible] the [illegible] 'We have created the heavens and earth only according to Truth (*bi-l haqq*)' (Qur'an 15:85 and 46:3). We [illegible] [illegible] these many others in which the [illegible] is said to have [illegible] down according [illegible] Truth, or others again [illegible] which the Prophet is said to have been [illegible] in [illegible] same way.[7] This *bi-l haqq*, then, establishes [illegible] very clear correspondence between [illegible]

creation of the higher, intermediate [illegible] lower worlds, [illegible] descent of the Qur'an [illegible] [illegible] Emissary. Instrument [illegible] place[8] of creation [illegible] revelation, the *haqq* confers [illegible] each being in the hierarchy of existence [illegible] degree [illegible] right, [illegible] a direction [illegible] truth. This *adab* requires their knowledge and respect. 'Truth, by which the things [illegible] created' (*al-haqq al-makhlûq bihi*), [illegible] Ibn Barrajan[9] used to refer to the Muhammadian Reality, the principle of manifestation, of revelation and of the prophetic mission, constitutes the foundation of this *adab* [illegible] consequently the foundation of the law.

> It is towards Truth, by which the world was created, that [illegible] respect *adab*, for It is the cause of the existence of the beings of the world. According to this Truth (or this Right), God will divide men on the Day of Resurrection, and will judge them; by It, He revealed the holy laws. God [illegible] to His Envoy, David: 'O David, we have established you [illegible] Viceregent on the earth. Judge between men according to Right (*bi-l haqq*) [illegible] do [illegible] follow passion' (Qur'an 38:26). [illegible] is also created by the Truth (*bi-l haqq*), since it [illegible] part of that which is between [illegible] [illegible] earth, or, better, it [illegible] the earth itself.[10] The *maqâm* of [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] to [illegible] according [illegible] Right [illegible] [illegible] keep to it. [illegible] beware of imagining [illegible] truthfulness (*sidq*) is to be confused with Truth (*al-haqq*), because [illegible] say, 'He told the truth' (*haqqan* or *sidqan*) when [illegible] is truthful in his speech. It is the Truth which judges truthfulness or the lie, for good or evil. Now it praises truthfulness, now blames it, forbids it and praises the lie, which is its opposite, prompts it and makes practice of it obligatory. Now, it blames the lie, forbids it, praises truthfulness [illegible] orders it. Such is the *maqâm* of *adab*. Whoever [illegible] it benefits by it in any circumstances. Attach yourself to it and follow its [illegible] [illegible] and indications in revealed laws and in the [illegible] of the Envoy, which [illegible] should take [illegible] model, not those which relate to [illegible] privilege, for [illegible] would not [illegible] [illegible] respecting of *adab* in respect of Right (*al-haqq*). (*Futûhât* II, 285)

[illegible] of [illegible] [illegible] *(adab al-haqîqa)*: The last form of *adab* takes account only of God Himself. Insofar as *adab* presupposes duality, it must [illegible] renounced (*tark al-adab*).

'*Adab* requires the Other. Now, there is [illegible] station [illegible] which others vanish; *adab* ceases, for there is no longer any other [to relate to]' (*Futûhât* II, 286). In conformity to his [illegible] requirement, however, this *maqâm* [illegible] in its turn be left behind, for that of the 'abandonment of *adab* in respect of Essential Reality', which is none other than [illegible] *al-haqq*. Indeed, 'the whole Qur'an came down in this station, [illegible] from some isolated verses' (*Futûhât* II, 286). These are [illegible] in which God attributes [illegible] Himself the origin of all, evil as well [illegible] good, conforming to reality or essential truth, *haqîqa*.[11]

After mentioning the conflicts which, from the point of view of *adab*, the delicate relation between *haqq* and *haqîqa* may bring about,[12] Chapter 169 on the station of abandonment of *adab*, ends thus:

> Is there [redacted] perplexity? Such is the ambiguous (*al-mutashâbih*). He to whom God has not given knowledge, must say, 'We believe in Him, all comes from our Lord, but none recollects it but those who have [redacted] understanding [redacted] (*ulû'l-albâb*)' (Qur'an 3:7), 'those who [redacted] notice of the [redacted] of understanding (*lubb al-'aql*), [redacted] of its husk'.[13]

So, we are back again at [redacted] Qur'an, the source of the conflict, since it confers upon beings an immediate right or truth, and also the place of [redacted] resolution, for it brings them back to their essential truth: He, Whose Word it is.[14]

THE QUR'AN AND *ADAB*

> The first thing God gave to His servants as an order is the meeting (*jam'*). This is nothing other than *adab*, a word derived from *ma'duba*, 'banquet', or the act of meeting for a meal (*al-ijtimâ' 'ala 'l-ta'âm*), just as *adab* is the meeting together of all good (*jimâ' al-khayr kulliht*). The Prophet, upon him grace and peace, said: 'God instilled *adab* in me', i.e. has brought together in me all forms of good – 'and He made it perfect in me', i.e. has made of me the place of all perfection.

The servant of God is [redacted] compared to a [redacted] collector, charged with bringing together everything about which he received orders. At the end of [redacted] mission, the good servant receives only praise, but the [redacted] who showed himself dishonest must [redacted] before the court of [redacted] (*dîwân al-muhâsaba*), [redacted] opposite of the faithful servants, the *umanâ'*, who acquitted themselves of the mission entrusted to them (*amâna*).

> What man can bring together best during his life, is acquiring knowledge 'by' God, [redacted] with the virtues of [redacted] (*al-takhalluq bi-asmâ'ihi*), [redacted] holding fast to what his quality of servant necessitates, and is respecting what the [redacted] of his Lord requires, conforming to His orders (*Futûhât* II, 640).

Adab, then, is the way of perfection, incarnate by the Prophet, and founded on the distinction of [redacted] and Lord, instituted by the *haqq* of Revelation. Moreover, the whole proof of this [redacted] the meaning of 'bringing together' [redacted] up in the root *jm'*, [redacted] meaning also included in [redacted] *qr'* and *ktb* from which are derived *qur'an*, recital [redacted] reading, [redacted] *kitâb*, writing and book; [redacted] thus both modalities, oral [redacted] written, of Revelation.

At the risk of [redacted] repetition, the beginning of Chapter 394, *Munâzala*[15] is entitled: 'He who observes *adab*, arrives, and he who [redacted] arrived, [redacted] return, [redacted] he is not [redacted] *adîb*.' This illustrates the relation between *adab* and the *Qur'an*, [redacted] absolute bringing-together and the Prophet, that Universal Man and first [redacted] *adîb*, who received the Words of Bringing-Together (*jawâmi' al-kalim*).

Know, may God assist us, that absolute existence is pure good, just as absolute inexistence is pure evil. Between these two, possible beings receive an apportionment of good, insofar as they are receptive [redacted] existence, and of evil, insofar as they [redacted] receptive to inexistence. Now *adab* is none other than the bringing together of all good. The banquet (*ma'duba*) received its name because it is the bringing of several people together around nourishment. Clearly, good [redacted] in [redacted] world [redacted] fragmented fashion (*mutafarriqan*), so that each possible being receives [redacted] of good. The perfect possible being (*al-mumkin al-kamil*) created [redacted] ding to the Divine Form, and having received as privilege the Sura of the Archetype,[16] must necessarily bring together all good. For [redacted] reason, [redacted] Viceregency (*niyâba*) revert to him [redacted] of right. God said: 'And He taught [redacted] all the Names' (Qur'an 2:31). Now, there is only name and [redacted] Muhammad, upon him be grace and peace, also received [redacted] knowledge of [redacted] Names when he stated, 'I have known the First Ones and the Last.'[17] This [redacted] teaches us that he received the knowledge of the Names which belong to primordial knowledge [primordiality coming of Adam, [redacted] first in [redacted] existence]. The Prophet also said of himself that he had, to the exclusion of [redacted] others, received as privilege 'the Words of Bringing Together' (*jawâmi' al-kalim*). Words [redacted] [redacted] very being of the things named (*a'yan al-musammayât*); in the verse: ' . . . [redacted] His Word He cast upon Mary' (Qur'an 4:171); the Word is none other [redacted] Jesus. The beings of all existents are, then, the inexhaustible words of God. Thus Muhammad, having received the names [redacted] the things named, brought together all the good and earned lordship over all [redacted] He, himself, said: 'I shall be the Lord of men on the Day of Resurrection.'[18]

In the title of the chapter 'arrived' [redacted] arrived [redacted] the realization of pure good, described in the *hadith* in which God says: ' . . . until I am the hearing by which he hears . . .'[19] and other like words. Such is the arrival [redacted] eternal felicity [redacted] [redacted] goal sought. Without [redacted] doubt, he who [redacted] arrived, does [redacted] return, for it [redacted] impossible, after the 'removal of the blindfold' (cf. Qur'an 50:22) to return to the place marked out by the veil. Once the knowledge has been acquired, the wise man [redacted] no longer not know the thing known. God has removed the blindfold which covered [redacted] the inner and outer sight of the Men of God who arrived at perfection by reason of the divine qualities realized by them, and of the creaturial qualities practised by them, which, [redacted] [redacted] have previously seen, [redacted] all divine. These are [redacted] [redacted] (plural of *adîb*) worthy to stand on the divine carpet and [redacted] sit in the [redacted] [redacted] of God, the People of God, the People of remembrance (*dhikr*) [redacted] of the Qur'an, which is the bringing together (*jam'*), and was for [redacted] reason called Qur'an. As to people of the common kind, the blindfold will be removed from them only at their death, and they will [redacted] things as they are in reality. Even if they are not [redacted] the blessed, they will see the blessed and their felicity, and also those in misery and their calamity. They will no longer be unknowing after receiving this knowledge, even if they [redacted] [redacted] the damned. This is the meaning of: [redacted] [redacted] who [redacted] arrived, does [redacted] return, even if he is not an *adîb*,' i.e. bringing together good. It is said of the *adîb* that he brings good together, while good is a single reality, for it manifests itself [redacted] less in the multiple [redacted] diverse forms brought together by the *adîb*.

[. . .]

> It is beyond denying that God can bring the
> world together in a single being.

The [illegible] appears in a form of the True One (*sûrat haqq*) in the world:

> He separates, by the multiplicity of his forms, that which is together, and [illegible] brings together, by his essential being, that of it which is scattered.[20]

[illegible] is not an [illegible] insofar as he does not possess this quality [illegible] this ability. The *udabâ'* are 'those who, when [illegible] [illegible] them, bring about [illegible] mention of God.[21] And when [illegible] do, that mention contains the entire world . . .' (*Futûhât* III, 556)

The Qur'an teaches and exhorts. The master's model, it forms – or instills – *adab*, as much by the word as by the attitude of him who hears and [illegible] to follow it. The *munâzala* – 'My whole Word is exhortation (*maw'iza*) for My Servants, if only they would [illegible] It go through them' – underlines this aspect of the Qur'an, which is for the Shaykh al-Akbar the best lesson of *adab*. The introductory [illegible] begins with this [illegible]

> Whatever exhortation you make, let it be by My Word;
> It alone gives satisfaction to the right of each station.

Without faith, the servant would be unable to receive the Divine Word [illegible] beneficial and formative exhortation. Awareness of the free gift (*imtinân*) which is faith, [illegible] prompt [illegible] to respond to the Divine solicitude (*i'tinâ'*) with the only gift he [illegible] give to God in return: ' . . . to work according to His Law and respect that which He has forbidden and ordained.' But whatever his zeal, the servant cannot but recognize [illegible] powerlessness before the immensity of Grace. At [illegible] the Word instills [illegible] double *adab*: the sense of the freeness of the act[22] and the [illegible] ding back of the servant to knowledge of himself. It must be noticed in passing that *ma'duba* contains the meaning of freeness; it is defined thus in the chapter on the *maqâm* of *adab*:

> The action of coming together for [illegible] meal simply because one is called upon to take part, without [illegible] specific reason [illegible] [illegible] wedding, circumcision, initiation [illegible] sacrifice [illegible] the birth of [illegible] child. (*Futûhât* II, 285)

A *hadîth* indeed compares the Qur'an to [illegible] banquet: 'This Qur'an [illegible] the banquet of God; take of it as much [illegible] you can . . .'[23]

Let [illegible] return to exhortation. God, knowing the natural tendency of man to stray, reminds him of death. Ibn 'Arabi immediately [illegible] [illegible] by 'death' he [illegible] [illegible] from one [illegible] to another. He intends by this to respect the Divine injunction: 'And do not [illegible] "dead" those who have been killed in the path of God' (Qur'an 2:154). Martyrs have simply passed from one [illegible] to another, but [illegible] favour of which they are [illegible] objects is [illegible] less [illegible] [illegible] for exhortation by 'death'. Receptive

hearing of the Word requires, then, absolute respect for the letter of [redacted] Qur'an.[24]

> Thus, are we commanded to say by 'Him Who instills *adab*' (*al-mu'addib*)[25] for we have received a share of the Divine *adab* by which God formed His Envoy, [redacted] and peace upon him. God's [redacted] is not anyone's privilege. [redacted] one [redacted] receives it, knows felicity, is of the number of those in whom God has instilled *adab*, and who bind themselves to Him by that *adab*. God has forbidden us [redacted] say of him who is killed in the path of God, that he is dead; we do not, then, think that he is dead, but alive, and, according to [redacted] faith, he is provided for [cf. Qur'an 3:169]. (*Futûhât* IV, 67)

The reminder of the closeness of God, the other form of the exhortation gives rise [redacted] more precise [redacted] of respect for [redacted] letter of the Qur'an:

> As the extreme closeness of God is the greatest veil separating man from this closeness, God reminds man that He is closer to us than our jugular vein [cf. Qur'an 50:16]. We know it is close [redacted] us, but [redacted] see it. In the [redacted] way, we believe God to be close to us, but our looking cannot reach Him (. . .) and He is with us wherever (*haythumâ*) we may be, or rather wherever (*aynamâ*) [redacted] may be.[26] We ask God's pardon for [redacted] deficiencies in language. Even if [redacted] speech comes from God,[27] *adab* is preferable, particularly regarding what [redacted] attributed [redacted] the Divine Dignity (*al-janâb al-ilâhî*). The [redacted] [redacted] [redacted] leave it [redacted] matter of meaning. *Adab* consists in scrupulously respecting the words, for God [redacted] [redacted] chosen one word over another for no reason. We do not deviate from it for another with the same meaning, for that would be [redacted] alteration (*tahrîf*) without [redacted] slightest usefulness. The Enemy of God is content with [redacted] more from [redacted] greatest ones, if he [redacted] make them commit this *faux pas*, letting them be unknowingly in error, showing such [redacted] of soul and lowering themselves to such [redacted] extent, all the while imagining themselves to be in the Closeness of God, [redacted] of [redacted] sublime and superior rank (. . .). The servant dedicated to genuine servanthood, does not, even in perfect agreement with his Lord, allow himself the slightest familiarity (*idlâl*); what if he [redacted] to find himself out of agreement? By [redacted] reminder of Himself, God sends His servants back [redacted] their own souls by saying: 'If you know your souls, you know Me.' *Adab* requires me to come back and [redacted] [redacted] myself; to consider only God and neglect my soul, is not to observe *adab*. [redacted] I am not an *adîb*, I cannot sit on the divine carpet; I shall be deprived of the contemplation and knowledge which vision confers (. . .). [redacted] who [redacted] [redacted] to [redacted] we have [redacted] will [redacted] utterly clear about the divine exhortation. If he wants, he will take up his share in the inheritance and will exhort in his turn. If not, he [redacted] forever remain in that state, [redacted] attention directed on himself. The soul [redacted] [redacted] [redacted] [redacted] shoreless [redacted] We [redacted] meditate endlessly upon [redacted] in [redacted] world [redacted] the other. [redacted] is the [redacted] direct indication (*al-dalîl al-aqrab*). The more [redacted] [redacted] [redacted] it, [redacted] more knowledge of it grows, [redacted] [redacted] more this knowledge accumulates, the [redacted] knowledge of its Lord grows. (*Futûhât* IV, 68)

In the preceding [redacted] respect for the Letter contrasted with [redacted] freeing of forms in expression, which can come from the greatest saints.[28] The

munazzala (Chapter 445) – 'Do you know My saints, those I have formed by My rules of *adab*?' – explains this tendency in two ways. Firstly, by reference [illegible] the [illegible] forms of love expressed in the [illegible] 'Say: If you love God, follow me; God will love you' (Qur'an 3:31); and 'He who loves God is humbled (*dhalla* – an allusion [illegible] servanthood) and he whom God loves, allows himself [illegible] familiarity (*dalla*).' The *hadith*: 'God has instilled *adab* in me . . .' quoted [illegible] and without any transition, shows that [illegible] is [illegible] which differentiates these two modalities of love. A first answer is next given to the question asked. We know the spiritual dwellings of beings, saints [illegible] not, either by intuitive unveiling or by observance of divine *adab*.

> This *adab* [illegible] what God [illegible] instituted [illegible] a law for His servants, in His Envoys [illegible] by their mouths'.[29] Sacred laws [illegible] the rules of God's *adab* (*al-shara'i'* [illegible] *Allah*), established for His servants. By faithful carrying out of what the law requires (*haqq al-shar'*), we respect the rules of the *Adab* of the True one [illegible] *al-haqq*), and [illegible] know the saints of God (*awliya' al-haqq*). When we see a man bringing together the good and seizing it firmly, [illegible] know that he has respected [illegible] *adab* of God. The Envoy of God, grace and [illegible] [illegible] upon him – the truthful one, [illegible] [illegible] who knows best concerning his Lord – addresses himself thus to Him: 'The whole, the complete Good is in Your hands'.[30] If you [illegible] [illegible] know what Good is, know that it is the bringing together of the noble characteristics (*jima' makarim al-akhlaq*), which are known by natural [illegible] well as by sacred law (*al-'urf wa 'l-shar'*). (*Futuhat* IV, 58)

Certain of the Law's injunctions, such as the application of legal penalties, may [illegible] contrary to the virtues of pardon and leniency, but that is [illegible] a lack in the *makarim al-akhlaq*; the servant's *adab* consists first and foremost in obeying the order of his Lord. Aside from those who respect the *adab* of the True One, God or the *haqq* according to which the Book was revealed and the Law instituted, consider the qualification (*sifa*) and not the persons themselves (*ashkhas*). By 'qualification' [illegible] must understand the legal statute, positive or negative, and, ultimately, the final happiness or misery of the beings subject to Universal Law. If such a qualification inevitably attaches to all being, it is because manifestation implies [illegible] blending (*imtizaj*), be it only of essence and quality, of which the *haqq* keeps count without confusing them.

A difficult distinction: [illegible] the end of [illegible] ascension, the saint, such as Abu Yazid al-Bistami, may exclaim: 'I have no qualities' (*la sifata li*), for he is [illegible] [illegible] in the 'intelligibility of his original simplicity' (*fi ma'quliyyat basatatihi*). This simplicity, however, 'cannot [illegible] in determined, sensory existence, where there [illegible] none but composite beings [illegible] to happiness [illegible] misery according to their blend' (p. 59). The perspective of the Shaykh al-Akbar, following that of the Qur'an and the Prophet, is of the descent of the *haqiqa* back into the *haqq*, or rather of

their inseparability, [redacted] the [redacted] modalities of love which we touched upon above. At the end of this chapter, [redacted] new answer is given to the title of the *munâzala*, to conform, [redacted] the Shaykh indicates, [redacted] [redacted] of the angels who [redacted] [redacted] questions of their Lord, albeit [redacted] better knows the truth:

> You have brought us to know them by bringing us to know the rules of Your *adab*. You have [redacted] them to Yourself, saying: 'The [redacted] of God'. They are recognized by this sign: 'When we see them, they bring about our mentioning Allah,'[31] by reason of their realization by God: absolute servanthood, pure [redacted] without admixture (*al 'ubûda al-mahda al-khâlisa*) in no way altered by the quality of Lordship (*al-rubûbiyya*). Such are Your rules of [redacted] (p. [redacted]

We [redacted] return to the distinction which is [redacted] made, between [redacted] [redacted] of sainthood and the *adab* of divine vicegerency. The saint must manifest no quality of Lordship, unlike the *khalîfa*, for 'the saint is wholly God's and the *khalîfa* is [redacted] God's, [redacted] the world's.' The *khulafâ'* here means those who follow in the Prophet's footsteps, 'those who have been [redacted] alone (*al mufarradûn*): those whose rules of *adab* God Himself [redacted] [redacted] into [redacted] care.'

Adab was first defined as 'the bringing together of good'; then good [redacted] 'the bringing together of the noble characteristics'. It included, then, these characteristics or the virtues and their well-advised practice, in conformity to the *haqq*. The Law and the Path are themselves not otherwise defined, in reference to the *hadîth*: 'I have been [redacted] to perfect the noble characteristics,' often connected with the *hadîth* already quoted: 'I have received the Words of bringing together.'[32] The bringing together in the person of [redacted] Prophet of the Words and characteristics results from the divine *ta'dîb*, which may be explained by the compenetration of his inner being and the Qur'an which descended within him.[33] The Shaykh al-Akbar draws all these conclusions from the *hadîth* of 'Aisha [redacted] the 'character' of the Prophet:

> God, may He be exalted, said: 'You are according to a magnificent character' (Qur'an 68:4). When 'Aisha [redacted] questioned [redacted] the character of the Envoy, [redacted] him [redacted] [redacted] and peace, she replied: 'His character [redacted] the Qur'an.'[34] [redacted] [redacted] [redacted] because [redacted] character is absolutely peerless (*afrad al-khuluq*), and it [redacted] [redacted] [redacted] peerless character to gather together the noble characteristics. God [redacted] qualified this character with magnificence ('*azama*), [redacted] He has the Qur'an, in [redacted] Word: ' . . . [redacted] the Magnificent Qur'an' (Qur'an 15:87). Whoever wishes, [redacted] having known him, to see the Envoy of God, grace and [redacted] [redacted] him, let him look [redacted] the Qur'an. There [redacted] [redacted] difference between looking [redacted] him and at the Qur'an. It is [redacted] if the Qur'an had taken [redacted] bodily form named [redacted] Ibn Abdullah Ibn 'Abd al-Muttalib. The Qur'an [redacted] the Word of God, that [redacted] to say, [redacted] attribute. Muhammad is, then, in his total reality (*bi-jumlatihi*) [redacted] Attribute of [redacted] True One, may [redacted] be exalted. 'He who obeys the Envoy,

obeyed God' (Qur'an 4:80), for he does speak according passion (cf. Qur'an 53:3) but is tongue of truth (*lisân haqq*).[35] (*Futûhât* IV, 60–61)

THE *ADAB* OF THE PROPHETS

Adab is skill in doing, and still more skill in saying. If the divine word, and so the Prophet, have in them all forms of *adab*, certain passages of the Qur'an reveal some of the forms with greater clarity. These the in which beings closest to God, the prophets and angels, address prayer to God (*du'â*). God sometimes corrects them in order instill in them *adab*, which then comes *ta'dîb*. Consequently, *adab* plays an essential role in the interpretation of these

Certain prophetic expressions inspired by revelation illustrate interpenetration of the innermost being of the Prophet and Qur'an suggested by 'Aisha's *hadîth*. Commenting upon formula of which the Prophet uttered just before the recitation from the Qur'an in prayer, Ibn 'Arabi observes that it represents the form of *adab* (*ghâyat al-adab*). In saying: 'O my God, purify of sins the white garment is cleansed of its dirtiness,'[36] the Prophet echoes the divine order: 'Cleanse your garments' (Qur'an 74:4). By using the word 'garment' (*thawb*, pl. *thiyâb*) he conforms literally to the divine order by adapting the same form (cf. *Futûhât* I, 417).

Even the very gestures of the prophet from this Quranic shaping. To indicate that the month of Ramadân may be twenty-nine thirty days long, the Prophet expressed himself thus: 'The month is like this – he showed the fingers of his hands – and this – he made the same gesture – and like this – he first in finger to indicate nine, and held it out again to indicate ten.' The Qur'an in fact says: 'O you who believe, it been prescribed for you fast . . . A certain, counted, number of days (*ayyaman ma'dûdât*)' (Qur'an 2:183–4). In this verse, revealed before the obligation to fast in the month of Ramadân, the plural *ayyâm* only a 'counted' number of days from three ten. The Prophet wanted, then, to make the obligation coincide with the of the first revelation (cf. *Futûhât* I, 628).

A hadith reports that an *'ifrît* from among the *jinn*s attempted to distract the Prophet from his prayer. God having given him power over this *jinn*, the Prophet wanted tie it a pillar of the mosque, show it to his companions. Then he released it, remembering the invocation of Solomon: 'Lord forgive me and grant kingdom which will proper to any after me!' (Qur'an 38:35).[37] The man who knows, the Shaykh al-Akbar indicates, is veiled by the exercise of power. If the Prophet forbears from manifesting it, it is only by *adab* towards his brother Solomon, for 'will not proper' means reality, 'which it will

proper for it manifested (*lâ yanbaghî zuhûruhu*).' There moreover no lack of Solomon's invocation. would uttered it, had he known exercise of power might place veil between God him. On contrary, God confirmed him by His 'He who refuses' and 'He who gives' (*al-mânî' al mu'tî*), in the following 'Such is our gift: grant restrain without account' (Qur'an 38:39). Interpretation of two verses of *Sûrah* 'Sad' us access a double *adab* of prophecy (cf. *Futûhât* I, 585).

The prophets, guardians of 'truth of right' (*haqq*) according which the heavens and earth were created the Book revealed, respect to the highest degree the share of existence which accrues to each being. As to pure inexistence, 'evil does return to You,' says the Prophet in one of his invocations,[38] renouncing thus the of essential reality, according which all proceeds from God. Al-Khidr recalls this *adab* of the *haqq* to Moses, who could not refrain from reproaching him for apparently contrary to the Law. The explanation which gives him (cf. Qur'an 18:79–82) presents model of '*adab* of attribution' (*adab al-idâfa*), one of the categories of *adab* of the Law listed in Chapter 202 'the spiritual of *adab*'. When al-Khidr explains why the boat, and said: 'So I wanted damage it,' he attributes a blameworthy act to himself. When says, about the murder of the young 'We wanted their Lord to replace him by better than him,' he underlines by the plural what action comprises, blameworthy and praiseworthy. Lastly, speaking of the wall rebuilt for the two orphans, in itself praiseworthy, the decision is attributed wholly to God: 'Your Lord wanted them to reach adulthood . . .' (cf. II, 481).

The Prophetic attribution of good to God, also illustrated in the Qur'an by the words of Abraham and Job, is respected in the highest degree by the Prophet himself in his invocations.

The Envoy of God, upon him be grace and peace, would say when happy event took place: 'The praise is God's, the Worker of Good, the Dispenser of graces', and, at the time of misfortune: 'The praise God's in every state,' as authentic traditions certify. is by virtue of divine *adab* that the Prophet did link the name Allah to another did the happy While 'He Who harms' (*al-dârr*) is one of the Divine Names, like 'the Beneficent' (*al-nâfi'*), mention 'He Who harms' in the formula of praise, by passion, but according a divine revelation.[39] he, the Truthful one, state: 'It God in me, and perfected it in me'? We know, then, that invocation (*dhikr*), and what it implies, belongs the rules of *adab*. God commanded us in Revelation to follow the Path of Abraham [cf. Qur'an 3:95]. Now, amongst rules which Abraham observed towards his Lord is numbered his word: 'And when I am sick, it is He Who heals me' (Qur'an 26:80). He attributed healing to his Lord, but sickness, which men generally consider evil, even if it contains a good for the believer. God informed His Prophet of the word of Abraham in order that he might in his turn observe that *adab*, which the Prophet, grace and

[illegible] him, did, saying: 'And evil [illegible] return to You' (*Futûhât* IV, 97–98, Ch. 468).

Ibn 'Arabi [illegible] the conclusion of this chapter that 'Praise belongs to God in every state' contains in its formulation all praises, [illegible] *ipso facto* belongs to the 'Words of bringing together' , which are the exclusive right of the Prophet.

The word of Abraham, conforming [illegible] the *adab* of the *haqq*, is compared elsewhere [illegible] the reply which Abu [illegible] to those who asked him, at the time of his last illness, if [illegible] had consulted a doctor. This reply [illegible] from the [illegible] of the *haqîqa*.[40]

> [illegible] replied: 'The Doctor made [illegible] sick,' while Abraham, the intimate friend, said: 'And when I am sick, it is He who heals me'. Compare these two statements; you [illegible] find Abu Bakr's [illegible] true (*ahaqq*); compare the two *adabs*, you will find [illegible] Intimate Friend's higher. No *adab* [illegible] surpass the rules of *adab* of Prophethood (. . .) 'And when I am sick' is an end (*nihâya*), 'It is He who heals me', a beginning (*bidâya*); the invocation of [illegible] Prophet, upon him [illegible] 'there [illegible] no healing but Thine,' [illegible] of the [illegible] (*nihâyat al-nihâya*), for it [illegible] more accomplished [illegible] comprises [illegible] aspects. (*Futûhât* IV, 275–6; Ch. 558, [illegible] *al-shifâ'*)

The invocation of Job (Ayyub), who [illegible] put to the [illegible] by God, proceeds from the same *adab*: 'And Job, when he called his Lord: "Evil has touched me, [illegible] Thou are the [illegible] merciful of the merciful!" ' (Qur'an 21:83). The prophet attributes evil [illegible] himself [illegible] calls from it to the Divine Mercy, beseeching relief from his ills. Far from contradicting the patience of Job, this supplication reveals another dimension of prophetic *adab*.

> If you conceive a desire which sickness and pain prevent you from realizing, hold back your soul from complaining to other than Him, who has given rise to that pain, and [illegible] decided for you what runs counter to your desire, [illegible] with Job – peace be upon him. Such is the divine *adab* He has taught to His prophets and envoys. God has brought about in you this pain and has decided contrary to your desire – which is in itself a part of His decision about you – so that you may [illegible] [illegible] you. Not to complain [illegible] God when you [illegible] an ill contrary [illegible] [illegible] desire, [illegible] to resist the divine constraint (*al-qahr al-ilâhî*). Abu [illegible] al-Bistami, tortured by hunger, wept. To the [illegible] who reproached him for it, [illegible] replied: 'He [illegible] hunger in order [illegible] I should weep.' *Adab*, [illegible] *adab*, [illegible] in [illegible] complaint addressed [illegible] God [illegible] [illegible] alone without losing by that the virtue of patience. [illegible] said of His envoy Job: 'We have found him patient . . .' (Qur'an 38:44). Where men [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] run [illegible] secondary [illegible] nothing shook him and he addressed himself only to God. (*Futûhât* IV, 143, Ch. 505)

By beseeching God's pity, Job observes *adab* at [illegible] [illegible] by respecting his condition as servant, as the following part of the [illegible] quoted above [illegible] 'What [illegible] excellent servant, [illegible] [illegible] unceasingly to God.' In the same way: 'the man who knows', [illegible] 'Arabi explains, after recalling the

example of Abu Yazid, 'even if he does feel capable of patience, [redacted] to [redacted] place of weakness, servitude and perfect *adab*. (*Futûhât* II, 29).[41] Moreover, [redacted] invocation: 'And Thou [redacted] the Most Merciful of the Merciful,' indicates [redacted] much turning to God alone, [redacted] implicitly, by the request for healing, confirmation of [redacted] institution of secondary causes (*ithbât wad' al-asbâb*). Not only does [redacted] to [redacted] not contradict orientation to God alone, but, while maintaining the being in a [redacted] of poverty and servitude, unveils [redacted] him the non-manifested [redacted] aspect of things, without undermining the order of manifestation. *Adab* [redacted] knowledge coincide in the conclusion of the commentary on the prayer of Job.

> We know, then, that patience is none other than holding the soul back from complaining [redacted] other than God. We mean by 'other' one particular face from among [redacted] faces of God (*wajh khâss min wujûhi Allah*). God the True [redacted] determined among His faces one particular face, called the face of His Self (*wajh al-huwiyya*). It is by that face that we invoke Him to suppress evil, and not by His other faces called 'causes', which [redacted] in the last analysis not other than He. The fact that the knower addresses himself to the Divine Self in order [redacted] suppress evil, does not veil him and does not prevent all causes being for him, from a certain point of view, God Himself. These [redacted] God's [redacted] who respect *adab*, [redacted] they alone, [redacted] [redacted] custodians of the Divine secrets, may follow this path (*wa* [redacted] *la yal-*[redacted] *tariqatuhu* [redacted] *'l-udabâ' min 'ibâdi'* [redacted] *al-umanâ' 'ala asrâri 'llâh*). God [redacted] faithful custodians whom He alone knows, and who know each other.[42] (*Fusûs al-Hikam* p. 174–5; 'Bezel of the Non-manifested Wisdom in the Word of Job')

In comparison with the *adab* of the prophets [redacted] those who follow them step by step, the bearing of the saints may be considered as a lack of *adab* (*sû' adab*). This bearing brings about a *ta'dîb* from God, [redacted] that the saint does [redacted] enclose himself in [redacted] heroism of virtues which would make [redacted] lose the [redacted] of servanthood. The Shaykh cites the [redacted] of Sumnun, nicknamed 'the Man in Love' (*al-muhibb*).[43] He had so well realized the station of patience (*sabr*) and of total agreement (*ridâ*) that he ventured [redacted] address to God this [redacted] of poetry:

> I expect nothing from other than You
> Put me to the test however You will

To cure him of this lack of *adab*, God inflicted retention of urine upon him, so that he would [redacted] to [redacted] from this degrading illness, and thus attain the highest degree of sainthood (cf. *Futûhât* II, 207–8).

The example of Sumnun shows that for the saints, any lack of divine [redacted] prophetic *adab* brings about [redacted] sanction [redacted] correction (*ta'dîb*), and consequently [redacted] purification and a growth in knowledge. [redacted] [redacted] can marvel [redacted] [redacted] of the Qur'an in which purified beings, prophets [redacted] angels, bring God's [redacted] upon themselves by opposing themselves to the action of God's almighty Power (*nufûdh al-iqtidâr al-ilâhî*).

> **And when your Lord said to the angels: 'I am about to set a Vicegerent (*khalîfa*) upon the earth,' they objected. 'Wilt Thou set one there who will sow corruption and spill blood, while we glorify Thee with Thy praise and proclaim Thy holiness?' (Qur'an 2:30)**

The angels were speaking in knowledge of course, but doubly contravene *adab*, since they oppose the divine will, and put themselves in the forefront. For this latter reason, they were obliged to prostrate themselves before Adam, and for the former, to spill their blood assisting the believers at the battle of Badr. Yet they had acted in conformity to their nature, that of the elect in the beyond, which is the dwelling of holiness and closeness (*dâr walâya*). By arousing the divine anger (*al-ighdâb al-ilâhî*), they were without knowing it participating in the fall of man on the earth, dwelling place of vicegerency (*dâr khilâfa*) in order for there to manifest in the fullness of the Divine Form (*kamâl al-sûra*). This contains all the divine aspects, certain of which, like Anger and Vengeance, cannot manifest in Paradise, but only this ephemeral dwelling, the earth. Without the fall, man would never have been called to realize among the divine attributes those which embrace all things, Mercy and Knowledge. Because they are maintained in a sphere of specific election, they cannot grasp the aspect of divine knowledge which includes punishment in mercy. Thus God reminds them, in answer to their objection: 'Certainly, I know what you do not' (Qur'an 2:30). *Adab* is in such circumstances identified with knowledge, which also brings together all good.[44] Only 'those who are deeply rooted in knowledge' (cf. Qur'an 3:7) are aware of the subtle causes of the divine anger. The Shaykh al-Akbar advises his readers thus:

> **Apply yourself most exhaustively to the knowledge of that which can give rise to the divine anger, in order to avoid it. That knowledge belongs to the science of secrets, which not all have it. It is the science of Hudhayfa Ibn al-Yaman, the companion of the Prophet of God, upon him be grace and peace, and led to his being known as 'Possessor of the Secret' (*sâhib al-sirr*).[45] God gives the saints no knowledge more useful than this. I have met no one who tasted it, nor has its effect had manifested in all of the People of God after Hudhayfa. This knowledge confers an imperceptible immunity ('*isma*). He who is favoured with it, scarcely notices it; the removal of veils from it is completely perfect. God grants it only to the *udabâ'*, people of vigilance (*ahl al-murâqaba*), who consider things according to the agreement of correspondence between Lord and vassal, Creator and created . . . (*Futûhât* III, Ch. 341)**

The rarity of this science is doubtless from its bringing together two types of knowledge, and so of spiritual bearing, the *adab* of sainthood (*adab al-walâya*), maintained by the angels and saints, and that of the Divine Vicegerency (*adab al-khilâfa*), whether it involves prophets or those who are, in this regard, their heirs.

> The saint bears help, but does not seek help (*yansuru wa lâ yantasiru*); the *khalîfa* seeks and brings help,[46] for he always finds himself an adversary. If the saint showed leniency, he would be no saint. He prefers nothing to God, for he is completely His. The *khalîfa* belongs now to God, now to the world, leaning at one [illegible] God by righteousness, [illegible] another, to the world, beseeching forgiveness for faults committed which would [illegible] the righteous condemnation of the saint. This being, [illegible] those [illegible] him, are 'the solitary ones' (*al-mufarradun*) whose [illegible] of *adab* God assigns to Himself the matter of instilling in them (*tawallâ* [illegible] *bi-nafsihi*). The *khalîfa* [illegible] times declares: 'I shall surpass [illegible] seventy'; [illegible] times he [illegible] Riʾl, Dhaqwan and 'Usiyya.[47] What a difference between [illegible] state and the other! States for the *khalîfa* vary, but not for the saint; thus he can in no way be the object of suspicion, while the *khalîfa* can be, for his state alters unceasingly. [illegible] has no [illegible] hurled out [illegible] assertion, than his powerlessness [illegible] it, while [illegible] truthfulness will [illegible] in another situation. The rules of [illegible] of [illegible] saints [illegible] [illegible] to those of angelic spirits. [illegible] Gabriel, [illegible] [illegible] him, [illegible] take mind to stop up the mouth of Pharaoh [illegible] prevent him from speaking [illegible] Words of Unicity? He sought to outdo him, even though [illegible] knew [illegible] Pharaoh [illegible] the knowledge of 'There is no God but God'. But Pharaoh prevailed and offered up the Words, [illegible] God, exalted be He, has told [illegible] in His Incomparable Book.[48] The *khalîfa* [Muhammad] said to his uncle: 'Say it in my ear; I shall bear witness of it for you before God,' [illegible] that time when his uncle refused.[49] [illegible] [illegible] difference from the word of that other *khalîfa* [Noah]: 'Lord, leave [illegible] a single soul of the unbelievers alive on the earth' (Qur'an 71:26). Now perhaps, had they lived longer, they would have returned to God, or from their loins would have sprung men who would have believed in God, [illegible] brought delight to the believers. The rules of *adab* of the saints are irrevocable [illegible] upon those who incur it from God; likewise irrevocable satisfaction towards those to whom God grants it. Such [illegible] [illegible] *adab* of the 'truth of right' (*al-haqq*) which here means that which necessarily must happen. The rules of *adab* of the *khulafâ'* are now satisfaction towards those who deserve it, and forgiveness too, and now anger towards those who incur it. (*Futûhât* IV, 60, Ch. 445)

When they protested against the appointment of [illegible] as Vicegerent of God on earth, the angels [illegible] lacking in *adab*. The [illegible] which was [illegible] upon them, reminded them that they [illegible] exceeded their limits. These angels [illegible] in fact subjected to the fulfilling of certain functions (*malâ'ikat al-taskhîr*), like assisting men, and believers in particular. On the other hand, when these [illegible] angels, conforming to their mission, brought their help (*nusra*) to the believers, pleading for divine pardon for them, they showed the most perfect *adab*, higher even than that of the prophets, with the demands of other exigencies. The first part of chapter 154, devoted to the 'station of angelic sanctity', is organized around [illegible] interpretation of [illegible] verses:

> Those who bear the throne and surround it, glorify the praise of their Lord, believe in Him, and ask pardon for those who believe:

> Lord, Thou dost [redacted] things in mercy [redacted] knowledge; forgive those who [redacted] repented and followed Thy way, protect them from [redacted] Blazing Fire, Lord, and admit them to the Gardens of Eden which Thou has promised them, and also the just [redacted] their parents, wives and descendants. Thou [redacted] the Almighty, [redacted] Wise. And protect them from sin; [redacted] whom Thou protectest from [redacted] on [redacted] day, Thou wilt have mercy upon, and that is [redacted] magnificent victory. (Qur'an 40:7–9)

All interpretation is founded upon the *adab* of invocation [redacted] intercession and [redacted] the [redacted] immediate exegetical process, but also the most profound : 'Commentary on the Qur'an by itself' (*tafsîr al-qur'an bi-l-qur'an*). By adding reference to the prophetic example, [redacted] Shaykh al-Akbar brings the *adab* of commentary [redacted] its perfection, in the double sense of spiritual propriety and technical competence.

> As to those angels, their patronage (*walâya*), i.e. their help [redacted] [redacted] believers, consists in this: when the believers commit a sin; when the divine names of vengeance are directed [redacted] them, and when at the stations of these names, the names of pardon, leniency [redacted] absolution of faults [redacted] in their turn directed, these angels, according [redacted] the Divine Word 'ask pardon thus for those who believe: Lord, Thou embracest all things in mercy and knowledge.' They [redacted] nothing more in favour of the disobedient [redacted] unrepentant believer, entrusting the matter to the knowledge which God has of what they intend by these words, by [redacted] towards God, glory [redacted] Him. The Divine Dignity in fact requires of the People of God, jealousy for Him, and invocation against the one who disobeys Him, and does not respect His order and that which is proper to [redacted] majesty. The angels, observing *adab* with God, say: 'Lord, Thou embracest all things in mercy, for Thou [redacted] [redacted] " . . . [redacted] My mercy embraces [redacted] things," ' (Qur'an 7:156). Now these sinners come into 'all things' and 'in knowledge', according to His Word: 'He delimits all things in knowledge' (Qur'an 7:156). This invocation of the angels is comparable to that of the Saintly Servant [Jesus], recorded by God: 'If Thou punish them, they [redacted] Thy servants; and if Thou pardon them, surely Thou [redacted] the Almighty, [redacted] Most Wise' (Qur'an 5:118). [redacted] respected *adab* with God on the [redacted] of his people who had disobeyed and not repented. God saw that [redacted] had shown *adab* in indirectly invoking mercy, knowing that mercy precedes His chastisement.[39] Nonetheless, the souls of angels show greater steadfastness in *adab*, for they know better than that [redacted] what is proper to the Divine Majesty. They said, [redacted] 'And if Thou pardon them,' but: 'Thou embracest all things in mercy [redacted] knowledge.' They were thus recalling to God in [redacted] indirect [redacted] what [redacted] [redacted] stated about Himself. Moreover, they mentioned mercy in the first place, in the [redacted] way [redacted] God had, concerning [redacted] [redacted] Khadir: 'We have given him, by mercy from Us,' before even saying what He [redacted] given to him by that mercy, which He [redacted] clarified: 'and [redacted] have taught him, from [redacted] knowledge' (Qur'an 18:65). For this [redacted] the angels began with mercy, without putting the sinners forward in their invocation. In [redacted] matter of *adab*, [redacted] large distance separates the word of Jesus for [redacted] people from the prayer of the angels [redacted] [redacted] of the sinners, for whoever looks perceptively at this verse. This is why the Prophet Muhammad, upon him be grace and peace, prayed [redacted] whole night long reciting the verse: 'And if Thou

> punish them, they are Thy servants.' He did not stop repeating it until daybreak. He was reciting the word of another, but his goal was clear.[51] . . . he did not do with the verse containing angels' invocation, for, by affinity, to Jesus, who himself closer the angels, having presented human being of beautiful appearance' (cf. Qur'an 19:17) mother, Mary, in order to bring him into existence. Muhammad, upon him be grace and peace, followed intermediary path to ask forgiveness on behalf of his people. The angels, then, plead for God's help for believers in a state of sin; as for those who have repented, they bring them help, saying: 'Lord, pardon those who have repented followed Thy path protect them from the chastisement of blazing fire.' They refer specifically them, for, after knocking on door of during their return to God, they in the station of divine closeness. From on, angels, doorkeepers of (*hajabat al-haqq*), in asking pardon for them, according to *adab*. The angels knowing also that between Heaven and an intermediate station, Limbo (*al-a'râf*), and that God, by the sweetness of His grace, responds to the call of the one who invokes (cf. Qur'an 2:186), 'and admit them, Lord, into the of Eden which Thou has promised them,' i.e. do not make them descend to Limbo, but them straight to Heaven; 'and also' in the of 'with', 'those who have been just among their parents, wives descendants. Thou art Almighty, the Most Wise.' None says: 'Thou the Most Forgiving, the Most Merciful,' by towards the Divine Dignity. By the choice of the two other names, they re-situate themselves in the presence of *adab* with God. At the angels bring help to the angels vowed to guarding the hearts of the of Adam and assisting them by their prayers against the attacks of the demons bound hearts of servants, saying: 'And the one Thou protectest from sin on that day, Thou wilt have had mercy upon.' Aside from this, the angels bring their help to all beings on earth, without restriction, believing or no, this shows: 'And the angels glorify the Lord with His praise and forgiveness for those who are earth' (Qur'an 42:5), in absolute fashion, without restriction by God. The earth includes all those it bears, so that believer and unbeliever partake in this asking for pardon. Then God announced to those who live the earth that their request for pardon had been granted, ending the verse thus: 'Is God not Most Forgiving, the Most Merciful?' (*Futûhât* II, 250–51)

This long extract, above all the interpretation of the last verse, which lends colour and shading what in the first is given in black and white, allows to grasp, by addressing the matter in terms of *adab*, the multiplicity of Quranic forms, which are themselves bound to the manifestation of the divine names. The turning towards the of a Divine Name imposes upon them a specific *adab*. The other way round, the divine *adab* keeps count of what each being can receive of the Divine Word. This is one of the lessons draw from an exhortation of the same kind, addressed by God Noah and the Prophet. God rebukes the former for mentioning his who drowned by refusing to enter the ark: 'Do ask of which you have no knowledge. I exhort you not be of the number of the ignorant' (Qur'an 11:46). Noah,

Ibn 'Arabi notes, [redacted] an old man; the rebuke is less harsh than the one the Prophet was to receive, then in [redacted] strength of his years. Afflicted by the unbelief of his people, he hoped for a sign to convince them, but God reminds him that this does not [redacted] him: 'If God [redacted] wished, [redacted] would have brought them together in His guidance. Do not be of the number of [redacted] ignorant' (Qur'an 6:35). [redacted] is [redacted] without interest to [redacted] that this remark concludes Chapter 167 [redacted] the 'alchemy of happiness', the account of the Shaykh's celestial journey, and thus precedes Chapter 168 [redacted] the *maqâm* of *adab* (cf. *Futûhât* II, 284 and also II, 617, Ch. 281). In its negative form, this exhortation may be likened to the order given to the Prophet always to seek more divine knowledge: 'And say, Lord, make me grow in knowledge!' (Qur'an 20:114). If God in [redacted] few verses instills *adab* into His Prophet, it is to make of him the receptacle of the knowledge which reflects *adab* in word and action.

'MY LORD HAS INSTILLED *ADAB* IN ME'

The Prophet received the order to call men to God. Yet he [redacted] accept that [redacted] will believe and others, not. 'It is only your duty [redacted] transmit the message' (Qur'an 3:20) or 'It is [redacted] your duty [redacted] guide them, but God guides whom He will' (Qur'an 2:272). Whether the message be received or refused is [redacted] matter for God's knowledge of His creatures; in no case [redacted] the Envoy prefer his desire to attract men to God, to his duty of transmitting knowledge to those who believe.This is the general understanding of the *Sûrah 'Abasa*. The Prophet was conversing in private with some rich Qurashite notables in the hope of converting them [redacted] Islam, and thus of attracting a great number in consequence. Then a poor and blind Muslim, 'Abdallah Ibn Umm Maktum, arrived [redacted] pectedly, and insistently asked the Prophet to teach him [redacted] [redacted] of the Qur'an. The Prophet, disturbed, turned away from him [redacted] devote himself to calling people to God, but then received this rebuke:

> He scowled and turned away. Because the blind man came to find him. What do you know of it? Perhaps he will purify himself. Or remember himself, [redacted] reminder will [redacted] [redacted] to him. As to [redacted] who plays the rich man. You [redacted] towards him. It is not your business if he does not purify himself. While as to him who hastens towards you. [redacted] the [redacted] of God. You [redacted] yourself be distracted from him. (Qur'an 80:1–10)

The Shaykh al-Akbar devotes more than [redacted] commentary[52] to these verses, in which he [redacted] one of the best illustrations of [redacted] word of [redacted] Prophet: 'My Lord [redacted] instilled *adab* in me, and [redacted] made it perfect in me.' This is first and foremost because [redacted] the rebuke there [redacted] 'One of the works of excellence of the Envoy of God' (*hasana min*

hasanât rasûli 'llâh). Those only are aware of this who can say, with the Shaykh: 'And [illegible] with the contemplative vision, the "taste" and rank of the Envoy of God, upon him be grace and peace.' 'Indeed for those who have understanding of reality (*al-muhaqqiqûn*), "him" in "you turn [illegible] him" refers [illegible] God' (*Futûhât* I, 563). The Prophet [illegible] in things the divine face which is in them; he [illegible] then not [illegible] the rich Qurashi but [illegible] the divine attribute of richness (*ghinâ'*). In the face of that attribute, [illegible] himself manifests poverty and indigence in his cry to God. Sent to show the divine signs to those who see, he addresses himself to [illegible] one who needs to be enlightened [illegible] relieved of blindness, while the blind man, illuminated by faith, is in reality clear-sighted (*bacîr*). Nonetheless, the divine rebuke or *ta'dîb* teaches him [illegible] to [illegible] the divine qualities conditioned in contingent beings (cf. *Futûhât* II, 149), but to [illegible] divine Reality in the totality of Its attributes.

> 'As [illegible] him who would [illegible] rich, you turn to him', only the quality [illegible] mentioned, not the person. Now, richness is [illegible] divine quality. The eye of God's Envoy, grace and [illegible] be upon him, did not turn to that quality, because he [illegible] fully realized poverty. But God wished to remind him that all His aspects are simultaneously embraced by Him (*al-ihâta al-ilâhiyya*) in order that attachment to [illegible] quality might not prevent him from grasping another. The vision by the Prophet of the divine richness in His Word: 'God is rich beyond comparing with [illegible] worlds' (Qur'an 3:97 [illegible] 29:6) [illegible] [illegible] override [illegible] vision of the divine entreaty in: 'And I have created *jinns* [illegible] men only that they may adore Me' (Qur'an 51:56). Yet, what a distance between the station of richness and that of entreaty, when God asks: 'And grant to God [illegible] goodly loan' (Qur'an 57:18 and 73:20)! From jealous love of the Prophet, God, glory to Him, did not [illegible] one quality to condition him rather than another. Subsequently, the Prophet, as was proper, put [illegible] [illegible] show of friendliness to the rich men, and showed the blind [illegible] his joy [illegible] seeing him, [illegible] it [illegible] important [illegible] [illegible] in the fact of these haughty men. Amongst those of noble character, humility and affability are of course always liked for their [illegible] sake. God did not [illegible] instilling *adab* into [illegible] Prophet, upon him [illegible] [illegible] and peace, until having fully realized the divine *adab*, he could say: 'My Lord [illegible] instilled *adab* in me, and has made it perfect in me'. God has a relation with the rich as well as with the poor; no divine aspect must escape the knower in any [illegible] whatever. What a beautiful education God [illegible] given [illegible] servants! [illegible] He [illegible] [illegible] eyes, those of our inner vision and of [illegible] intelligence, [illegible] understand that [illegible] are engaged with [illegible] rules of *adab* which He taught [illegible] Prophet to respect in relation to all the degrees of existence (*al-marâtib*). God [illegible] [illegible] *adab* for His Prophet, and means us to take him as example and model: 'There is for you a fine example in the Envoy of God' (Qur'an 33:21). [illegible] necessarily share in every utterance addressed by God to His Prophet, upon him be grace and [illegible] to instill *adab* in him. (*Futûhât* IV, 170–71, Ch. 527)

To sum up, the reproach is [illegible] [illegible] sanction upon a lack of *adab*, but teaches the Prophet another dimension of *adab*, [illegible] so bestows [illegible] increase in knowledge. The task of hermeneutics, however, [illegible] [illegible] limited [illegible]

unveiling [redacted] metaphysical meaning of [redacted] instance of prophetic comportment, [redacted] thus explaining why Revelation accords such importance to what might [redacted] a minor anecdote. Following the Divine Word, the interpreter [redacted] back down again to the classification of the path to follow in such circumstances. Under his pen, *adab*, like [redacted] master, [redacted] to the understanding of numerous Quranic passages, and then to the imitation of him whose character [redacted] formed by the Qur'an.

God, according [redacted] him, addressed the reprimand to the Prophet in order [redacted] fortify (*jabran*) the broken heart of Ibn Umm [redacted] [redacted] of people [redacted] him, who did not [redacted] towards whom he was truly turning. Another verse, associated with the commentary [redacted] those above, confirms that the Prophet [redacted] in no [redacted] [redacted] away from the poorest, materially and spiritually. As the noble Qurayshis had refused to [redacted] him in the presence of companions like Bilal or [redacted] b. al-Aratt, of low [redacted] servile origin, and as the Prophet [redacted] accepted this, again [redacted] of desire [redacted] [redacted] them enter Islam, [redacted] received this order:

> [redacted] patient in your soul in the company of those who invoke their Lord morning [redacted] evening, desirous of His face. Let your eyes [redacted] turn away from them, for desire of the finery of life here below. Do not obey him whose heart has been distracted by Us from Our remembrance, who follows [redacted] passion [redacted] excessive behaviour. (Qur'an 18:28)

The beginning of the following [redacted] reminds the Envoy that [redacted] is transmitting the Word, and [redacted] faith: 'Say, Truth comes from your Lord. Let him who wants, believe, and him who wants, disbelieve . . .'

> The Envoy of God, upon him be grace and peace, when he saw [redacted] [redacted] slaves, would exclaim: 'Welcome [redacted] those about whom my Lord rebuked me'. [redacted] they remained in his company, he would sit with them. it [redacted] impossible for him [redacted] rise and [redacted] until they did so of themselves, for God had said to him: 'Be patient in your soul.' Knowing that, [redacted] well [redacted] his other obligations, his companions lessened their attendance and stayed only a little time with him, [redacted] that he could go about his business. The Prophet then renounced his first attitude, [redacted] [redacted] of an authentic and divine vision (*mashhad sahih ilâhî*) in order [redacted] [redacted] all [redacted] attention [redacted] the broken hearts. For God is 'beside those whose hearts are broken.'[53] [redacted] is thus present in an invisible [redacted] which [redacted] confirms and [redacted] eye denies. He is on the other hand in [redacted] visible manner with those who manifest their greatness (*al-mutakabbirûn*), which [redacted] eye affirms, and faith denies. God brought his Prophet, upon him [redacted] grace and peace, back from the vision of [redacted] eye [redacted] that of faith, teaching him that His theophany in the persons of [redacted] [redacted] [redacted] powerful beings belongs to the adornment of life here below, an adornment which God has conferred on this life, not on us. [redacted] belongs to us is 'the adornment of God', which is [redacted] conditioned by [redacted] life of this world' (*Futûhât* II, 149, Ch. 177).[54]

Adab requires, then, that [redacted] take [redacted] [redacted] of the divine aspects [redacted] in [redacted] beings, [redacted] of the plane of existence in which they

manifest. These men, who in their own pretensions were rich, [redacted] in reality in [redacted] poverty with regard to the source of their richness. The [redacted] says: 'As [redacted] him who would [redacted] rich', and not 'him who is rich'. When [redacted] of God (*ahl Allah*), following the Envoy, perform the call [redacted] God (*al-du'â [redacted] al-da'wa [redacted] 'llâh*) in the presence of poor [redacted] of rich people, they [redacted] to the former, [redacted] in no way defer [redacted] the second [redacted] in order not to confirm them in their illusory position. Nonetheless, [redacted] one who calls to God must observe 'the balance of right' (*mîzân al-haqq*).

> If he omits it, he very quickly risks falling into error. The [redacted] (*wazn*) to respect *vis-à-vis* the rich, well-esteemed [redacted] consists in [redacted] showing oneself [redacted] attached to him, and also in [redacted] speaking to him in an imperious and humiliating tone, for this does [redacted] encourage him to humility, but repels him, and only increases his pride. [redacted] has received the order to call people to God. Let him do it then, [redacted] God has ordered and taught His Prophet, upon him be grace and peace, and this utterance is addressed also to [redacted] 'Say, this is my way; I call to God with clear sight, [redacted] and he who follows me' (Qur'an 12:108); or: 'Call to the path of your Lord with wisdom and goodly exhortation; if they dispute with you, answer them in the best manner' (Qur'an 16:125); and [redacted]n: 'If you [redacted] been rough [redacted] hard-hearted, they would have dispersed away from you' (Qur'an 3:159). Everyone who calls to God, [redacted] be like this.Let his heart [redacted] conceive the [redacted] hope in the goods of this world, nor the favour enjoyed by the one he calls, for: 'All power belongs [redacted] God, His Envoy [redacted] the believers' (Qur'an 63:8). Let [redacted] not take off the garment God has dressed him in. It is the only sphere in which he may act, and the meaning of 'wisdom' . . .

The revelation concerning Ibn Umm Maktum or Bilal and those like him, Ibn 'Arabi again notes, comes, before all else, to hearten them, and [redacted] remind the Envoy that only transmission of the [redacted] is incumbent upon him. The Shaykh draws from it this lesson in inner *adab*:

> The path to follow in spiritual direction (*ar-irshâd*) [redacted] the [redacted] to God has for a [redacted] balance richness in God (*al-ghinâ' bi-llâh*), and independence in [redacted] [redacted] of what men possess and of what [redacted] [redacted] obtain through them as intermediaries. If you have not this quality within you, do [redacted] call upon God, but busy yourself with calling upon your soul to qualify itself by that virtue. Do not exceed your own limits and do not make your way into what you do [redacted] possess; you would [redacted] [redacted] 'despoiler' and prayer in [redacted] 'despoiled' house (*al-dâr al-maghsûba*) is illicit. (This is [redacted] question upon which jurists differ.) Now [redacted] call [redacted] God, is a prayer. [redacted] pure and sincere performance requires freedom from subservience to the [redacted] you [redacted] calling. This is where we [redacted] make [redacted] of richness in God. To [redacted] away from it is to unbalance the scale; God has said: 'and do not lessen the balance weight,' and: 'so that you do not exceed the [redacted] weight' (Qur'an 55:9 and 8).[55] (*Futûhât* II, 256ff., Ch. 163)

Adab could then be defined as the subtle equilibrium between the opposing and complementary divine aspects, which are reflected into

This brings it close to the definition of knowledge by Abu Sa'id al-Kharraz, often quoted by Ibn 'Arabi: 'I have known God by His bringing together of opposites'.[56] Every attitude, whether it proceeds from metaphysical perception, such as vision of the divine face in beings (see *Futûhât* III, 219, Ch. 351), or on precept of the Law the Path, such as calling God, must be weighed in 'balance of truth and right' (*mîzân al-haqq*). No contradiction obstructs the comportment of the who perceives Essential Reality, while scrupulously respecting the Law, if that observance seems to the essential from those whose *adab* has not opened their eyes. It can even bring blame, just as the Prophet incurred a rebuke because of men's lack of understanding.

> The richest of the rich is he who is rich enough in God to do without rich men in God, if possess enough for one day. He is no less distressed for his dependants, for God has imposed on him the legal obligation to provide for their and food. Only the who scrupulously observes the Law, grasps *adab* in all its fullness, knows the worth of that has been instituted for him, and busies himself with that.[57] The path of the *udabâ'* is hidden. Only those know it who are 'rooted in the science',[58] who understand the realities as God gives them understanding. In the same way that God is not of what servants need, just so the People of God are heedless of the order God given them, present with Him not distracted from Him. Thus we may accomplished man (*al-kâmil*) concerned with providing for his family. The whom the veil prevents from seeing (*al-mahjûb*) imagines that this care of lack of certainty, and all the more if he puts some provisions aside. Yet only acquitting himself of *adab* towards God, and keeping within the limit fixed for him. For true knower, the light of knowledge does not extinguish that of scrupulousness and does not distance him from *adab*. He who transgresses God's limits, does himself injustice, and does even injustice to others. (*Futûhât* IV, 309, *hadrat al-ghinâ'*)

Interpretation of the above in the light of *adab* and *ta'dîb* forms key to other of the Qur'an in which God addresses the Prophet in tone or less tinged with rebuke. In the perspective opened up by the Shaykh al-Akbar, we may there an greater growth of receptivity of the heart to the Divine Word, and so to the Divine Knowledge. These verses, then, touch upon the function of the Envoy Envoy, and upon the universality of his mission, already underlined by *adab*'s characteristic bringing together. For the Prophet, the greater is in the reception of the Qur'an, the perfect is its transmission; for the Muhammadian heir, the deeper his understanding, for the Qur'an does descending upon the hearts of those who recite it.

The interpretation Ibn 'Arabi gives of the in which the Prophet is commanded not to revelation, and to wait for the Angel to bring it, illustrates perfectly the role of *adab* in hermeneutics:

[redacted] same time, an end. Across several verses, it [redacted] Revelation in its principle and in its ultimate meaning which is aimed at. [redacted] that not the meaning of *ta'wîl*, known to God alone [redacted] given [redacted] inheritance to 'those who are rooted in the science'?"

We must surely attribute the frequent references to [redacted] points of interpretation, delicate because they touch [redacted] mission of [redacted] Prophet, [redacted] the Shaykh's rootedness [redacted] the Quranic [redacted] prophetic forms of the science. But this rootedness [redacted] in its eschatological dimension, itself explained by his specific function by the [redacted] of the Seal of the Prophets.[60]

In the paragraph on 'the superiority of the giver of instruction over its receiver, and [redacted] *adab* which the disciple [redacted] observe towards his master' in the chapter on the 'Keys of the Treasures of Divine Generosity', the Shaykh takes [redacted] revealing detour to show the complexity of the relationship between the Prophet and the Angel of Revelation. From the point of view of Essential Reality, the teacher (*mu'allim*) is God, and revelation is direct. [redacted] the Prophet must observe [redacted] towards his master, Gabriel, by not unveiling that Essential Reality, so that from [redacted] to disciple, till the end of time, the chain would not be broken. Reception of divine knowledge by the Calamus [redacted] First Intellect makes of Him the first receiver of instruction, and, in His turn, the first [redacted] *vis-à-vis* the Guarded Table of the Soul. This principle is reflected [redacted] the institution of the first *Khalîfa*, to whom God directly teaches all [redacted] names, until the accession of 'the Greatest of Lords, whose perfection is attested, Muhammad, upon him be [redacted] and peace.' In addition to the science of the names, he receives 'the Words of Bringing Together'. The wise in his community, the best to be raised up for [redacted] (cf. Qur'an 3:110) are the heirs of the prophets 'until the arrival of the Seal of the Saints, the Seal of the Muhammadians who can give [redacted] ruling upon the Law (*Khâtam al-mujtahidîn al-muhammadiyîn*) and indeed until the final accession of the Universal [redacted] (*al-khatm al-'âmm*).'[61] The following commentary bears the hallmark of this Muhammadian seal:

> The Faithful Spirit, [redacted] – [redacted] [redacted] be peace – is the giver of instruction and the [redacted] of the envoys. [redacted] Muhammad, [redacted] [redacted] [redacted] [redacted] and peace, [redacted] receiving Revelation, he hastened the coming of the Qur'an before revelation of [redacted] [redacted] been completed,[62] in order to make it known that God [redacted] Himself undertaken to instruct him according to [redacted] specific mode (*min al-wajh al-khâss*), imperceptible to the Angel. God made of the Angel, descending to bring Revelation, a form of veil (*sûra hijâbiyya*).[63] He then revealed [redacted] the Prophet: 'Do [redacted] [redacted] your tongue to hasten its coming' by *adab*, the [redacted] Now, the Prophet [redacted] of himself: 'My Lord has instilled *adab* in me, and [redacted] made it perfect in me.' This shows well that God has undertaken his instruction, [redacted] the following [redacted] confirm: 'it is for Us to bring it together [redacted] unify its reading (*qur'an*). [redacted] when [redacted] have thus [redacted] it, follow [redacted] reading. Then [redacted] [redacted] for [redacted] to expound it'

> (Qur'an 75:19).[64] In these [redacted] God mentions only Himself, [redacted] attributes [redacted] Himself the reading, just as in 'My Lord has instilled in me . . .' God alone is mentioned, without intermediary or angel. We find this again in [redacted] the heirs of [redacted] Prophet, wise in exterior forms [redacted] in the [redacted] (*'ulamâ' al-rusûm – 'ulamâ' al-qulûb*), for instruction with or without intermediary reverts always to the Lord.[65] (*Futûhât* III, 400, Ch. [redacted]

In the prohibition, 'Do [redacted] move your tongue to hasten its coming' there [redacted] [redacted] difference between the projection of the Divine Spirit and Word into the hearts of the saints, and the Revelation which [redacted] Envoy transmits to institute the Law (cf. *Futûhât* II, 258, Ch. 159). The [redacted] which [redacted] must respect *vis-à-vis* his [redacted] Gabriel, [redacted] messenger who descended from Heaven, [redacted] necessary for there to take place the [redacted] between the two aspects of Revelation corresponding respectively to *haqîqa* and *shari'a*. Recalling in the 'Hierarchy of the Letters' the special place occupied by the letters of the *Bismillah*, the Shaykh indicates that they may for that reason [redacted] considered under two different aspects.

> We know by Unveiling (*kashf*) that revelation in distinct mode (*furqân*) was first received by the Envoy of God, grace and peace upon him, in a united and indistinct way (*qur'an mujmal*), not separated out into verses [redacted] *sûrahs*. This [redacted] why [redacted] would hasten its coming when Gabriel, [redacted] upon him, brought him the Revelation in distinct mode. [redacted] [redacted] told: 'Do not hasten the coming of the Qur'an . . .', which you know already, for you would then give it out in [redacted] indistinct form, and you would not [redacted] understood, ' . . . before its revelation has [redacted] completed . . .' in distinct and detailed mode 'and say: "make [redacted] grow in knowledge" by the distinction of [redacted] meanings which Thou hast brought together in me in [redacted] indistinct way.' (*Futûhât* I, 83, Ch. 2)

'YOU ARE YOU AND HE IS HE'

The Prophet, [redacted] then all the spiritual men of Islam, have been formed by reception of the Qur'an in its double aspect of bringing together and separation. *Adab* itself includes these two aspects, and for [redacted] [redacted] constitutes the golden rule of interpretation in the Shaykh al-Akbar's work. To a large [redacted] the aspect of distinction prevails in his hermeneutic process because it corresponds to the clarification (*bayân*) which God Himself has undertaken (cf. Qur'an 75:19) and, in the mat- [redacted] of spiritual realization, to servanthood (*'ubûdiyya*) of which the Prophet showed the example.

The attribution of good to God and evil to man, some examples of which [redacted] have [redacted] is [redacted] to [redacted] explained only by respect [redacted] [redacted] Divine Dignity. We must see [redacted] [redacted] pointing out [redacted] path [redacted] follow in order [redacted] understand the Qur'an and its descent.

Consider the possible things before their manifestation in the entities proper [redacted] them (*'ayn*). [redacted] (*al-haqq*) [redacted] Himself in them only in [redacted] form of that which they can receive. They are not, then, according to the divine form in reality, but the one who is ruled according to the form of the one who rules him (*al-mudabbar [redacted] sûrat al-mudabbir*). In the former there manifests only what he [redacted] to receive of the latter, and no more. God is then none other [redacted] modality of being of the creatures (*fa-laysa 'l-haqq [redacted] mâ huwa 'alayhi 'l-khalq*). [redacted] see [redacted] know nothing else of God. He [redacted] in Himself [redacted] only He knows; to Him belongs that which can in no case be known, as His Word points out: 'God is rich with regard to the worlds' (Qur'an 3:97, 29:6). This knowledge about God, exalted by He, to which we have just drawn attention, [redacted] not divulging by free choice, but divine constraint has decided upon it. Keep it [redacted] precious thing [redacted] neglect it; it will teach you *adab* with God. From this station His word [redacted] 'That which strikes you [redacted] good, comes from God, [redacted] what strikes you as evil, [redacted] from you' (Qur'an 4:79), which [redacted] 'I have given [redacted] you only as [redacted] you were able to receive.' The overflowing of divine grace (*al-fayd al-ilâhî*) [redacted] vast, [redacted] is His gift which nothing holds back. You get of it, however, only what your own [redacted] is [redacted] to receive. [redacted] is what limits the [redacted] [redacted] brings [redacted] into narrowness. The 'measure' in which His governance is indispensable [redacted] you, is the Lord you adore, the only one you know. (*Futûhât* IV, 62, Ch. 447)

The Shaykh invites [redacted] reader of the Qur'an to follow him into this metaphysical setting of the sight and initiatory path in which the other [redacted] effaced, while affirming his otherness:

Beware of reading the *Qur'an* otherwise than as *furqân*, for God 'misleads many by it' – plunges them into perplexity – 'and guides many by it' – gives them understanding by His own clarification (*bayân*) – and He misleads by [redacted] only [redacted] corrupt' – those who overstep His limits [redacted] His rules (Qur'an 2:26). You [redacted] and He is He (*anta [redacted] huwa huwa*). Beware of saying, like that impassioned lover (al-Hallaj): 'I am the One I love, and the One I love [redacted] me.' Was [redacted] able to bring them back to [redacted] single entity? By God, he was not, for ignorance is an impossibility. By mentioning himself with the one he loved, he separated them. [redacted] faith in [redacted] separation (*furqân*), you will be of the people of demonstration (*burhân*) or, better, of those of unveiling and vision (*'iyân*). You know [redacted] a blindfold must [redacted] removed [cf. Qur'an 50:22]. You believe that; well, do [redacted] delude yourself by saying: 'I [redacted] [redacted] and He is I.' (*Futûhât* IV, 401, Ch. 559 ref. [redacted] Chap. 367)

The Qur'an came down [redacted] that the Divine Word might be revealed in the language of [redacted] God does not, then, ask him to [redacted] anything other than himself.

It is not commendable for [redacted] to adorn [redacted] with [redacted] attributes of [redacted] master, for it is [redacted] lack of adab. On the other hand the master may assume by humility (*tawâdu'*) the attributes of the servant. This descent has no effect [redacted] the master, but he does this kindness to his servant in order to put him at ease. In his heart, in fact, the majesty of the Master is so great that it could not be an indication [redacted] His subject, if [redacted] did not come down to him. The servant could not,

> for his part, adorn [redacted] with [redacted] qualities of his master, either in [redacted] presence or *vis-à-vis* other servants, [redacted] brothers, [redacted] if God entrusts authority to him over them. (*Futûhât* I, 173, Ch. [redacted]

To understand, and enable others [redacted] understand, this Word, the first hermeneutic attitude and rule of exegesis to [redacted] respected is that of *adab*. Otherwise, how would a right balance be held between the aspects of transcendence and similarity (*tanzîh-tashbîh*) in which God manifests Himself in likeness and otherness to man?

> Know, and may God assist you by [redacted] spirit proceeding from Him, that affirmation of transcendence of the Divine Dignity is, for the people of the essential realities, only limitation and conditioning. He who affirms divine transcendence is [redacted] ignorant man, [redacted] one devoid of *adab*, if he expresses [redacted] professes [redacted] in [redacted] absolute manner. He who professes [redacted] [redacted] in the revealed laws, affirming only [redacted] transcendence, seeing nothing else, commits [redacted] dereliction of *adab* [redacted] unknowingly [redacted] the Word of God and of the Envoys – the [redacted] of God [redacted] upon them. He thinks he is a winner: he is in fact a loser, and is like those who have believed in [redacted] part of the book and [redacted] in another (cf. Qur'an 2:85). Yet he well knows that the languages in which the divine laws have [redacted] revealed, express themselves, when the subject is God, either in a general fashion according to the first meaning of the expression used (*al-mafhûm al-awwal*), or in a particular way according to [redacted] of the meanings which the expression [redacted] take on [redacted] the language. God, indeed, manifests Himself in every [redacted] He is the Exterior in every object of understanding and the Interior, inaccessible to all understanding (*huwa al-zâhir fî kulli mafhûm wa 'l-bâtin 'an kulli fahm*) if it is [redacted] in the understanding of the one who professes that the world is His form [redacted] His Ipseity, or, again, His name the Exterior, in the same way that He is, in the order of the meaning of the expression, the spirit of that which is manifested, or [redacted] name the Interior. (*Fusûs*, p. 68)

God in His descent loses nothing of His exaltation, for He is beyond [redacted] limits. Because of this, the only way to avoid limiting Him is to respect the form in which He has manifested Himself. We understand, from then on, the importance which Ibn 'Arabi attaches to the exterior (*zâhir*) meaning of [redacted] Qur'an, to its letter, or more exactly [redacted] its letters. [redacted] [redacted] commentary, [redacted] lost, *al-jam' wa'l-tafsîl fî asrâr al-tanzîl*, 'Unitive and distinctive knowledge of the Secrets of Revelation', makes reference in its very title [redacted] the two faces of the Qur'an. It comprised more than three levels of interpretation: the Majesty (*jalâl*) and the Beauty (*jamâl*) brought together and surpassed in Perfection (*kamâl*), the point of view proper to the 'Muhammadian Heir' and founded upon One Science of the Letters.[46] Educated in the respect of the letter of the Qur'an, the Shaykh takes care that [redacted] dereliction of [redacted] should slip from his pen. The following example, containing the twelve Poles corresponding to the signs of the zodiac, shows that this care does [redacted] [redacted] from a simple respect for convention:

> Each of them is upon the heart, or, if you will, upon the foot – it is preferable to say it thus – of one of the prophets. I saw it thus at the unveiling at Seville and [redacted] much better respects [redacted] towards [redacted] Envoys. ***Adab*** is our ***maqâm***, [redacted] is the ***maqâm*** which I [redacted] suitable for me [redacted] of God. (***Futûhât*** IV, 77, Ch. 463)

THE SEAL OF MUHAMMADIAN SAINTHOOD AND *ADAB*

The link [redacted] between the Qur'an, the Prophet and ***adab***, by which, [redacted] well [redacted] the bringing together of good and of the divine words, the separation of the [redacted] and Lord is accomplished, allows us [redacted] understand one of the aspects of the function of the Seal. All the examples of interpenetration proposed here indicate veneration, reserve and depth of meaning *vis-à-vis* the text itself, and those it involves, the prophets in general and the Prophet in particular. That is the characteristic of [redacted] being imbued with the Qur'an, in the footsteps of him whose character was the Qur'an. To the question: 'By what quality does the Seal of Muhammadian sainthood merit that function?' he [redacted]

> By [redacted] perfecting of the noble characteristics with God. All that men have been [redacted] observe of him comes of the [redacted] that the characteristics he maintains towards them, coincide perfectly with maintenance of the [redacted] characteristics *vis-à-vis* God. In fact, private interests (*al-aghrâd*) diverge, and noble characteristics [redacted] considered, by the [redacted] to whom they [redacted] practised, [redacted] agreement with his own interest, be this praiseworthy or blameworthy for anyone else. But, [redacted] the [redacted] could not, in this life, [redacted] himself in total harmony with the universe while holding [redacted] to what is, for him, beautiful and good (*jamîl*), he could, following the example of the wise man who does what is needful, as it is needful because it is needful, [redacted] no companion comparable to God (*al-haqq*), [redacted] company comparable to His. Seeing that happiness inheres in His business and conformity to His will, he considered the limits and laws instituted by Him, held to them and followed them. Amongst all He has instituted, God taught him how to comport himself with all that is other than He: purified angel, honoured envoy, every *imâm* to whom God [redacted] entrusted the affairs of His [redacted] from *Khalîfa* to customary [redacted] (*'arîf*), companion male [redacted] female, close relative, child, [redacted] or governess, animal, plant [redacted] mineral, [redacted] substance, accident [redacted] property if [redacted] refers [redacted] what can be owned. By devoting [redacted] attention [redacted] the True Companion (*al-sâhib al-haqq*), he turned it towards what we have just said. It is, then, with his Master that he observed these characteristics, which merited his being told, like the Prophet, 'You [redacted] according to a magnificent character' (Qur'an 68:4). 'Aisha also said: 'His character was the Qur'an;' he praised what God [redacted] praised [redacted] blamed what God had blamed, holding a language of truth (*lisân haqq*) 'upon a throne of truthfulness, beside an Almighty King' (Qur'an 54: 55).[67] The excellence of his origin, the observance of the noble characteristics with the entire universe and the extension of his benevolence to all the horizons, earned for him

> the sealing of [redacted] sainthood, [redacted] words: 'You [redacted] according to a magnificent character.' (*Futûhât*, II, 50, quest. 4)

It [redacted] much, [redacted] the [redacted] time little, that this function has been claimed by and for others than the Shaykh al-Akbar. It must above all [redacted] borne in mind that the universality of the function is attached [redacted] the same time to the excellence of the character, and [redacted] inner [redacted] [redacted] conformity to the Qur'an and the Prophet. Can [redacted] [redacted] in the history of *tasawwuf* [redacted] [redacted] in whose works exegesis of the Qur'an and [redacted] holds such [redacted] eminent place, an interpreter who made of [redacted] one of the foundations of his hermeneutics? [redacted] is not [redacted] all [redacted] matter of making an *apologia pro* Ibn 'Arabi, but simply of showing, following [redacted] predecessors, that the function of Seal stemming from the *haqîqa muhammadiyya*, is fully realized in the hermeneutic and eschatological significance of the *ta'wîl*; 'The Qur'an and he are brothers, [redacted] the Mahdi is brother to the Sword.'[49] The calamus of the interpreter and the sword of the fighter both battle 'to raise high the Word of God'.

NOTES

1. Cf. Roger Deladrière's introduction [redacted] *Ibn 'Arabi, la Profession* [redacted] *Foi*, Paris, 1978; [redacted] Chodkiewicz, *Le Sceau* [redacted] *Saints*, Paris, 1986; and by the same author, 'Introduction to Ibn 'Arabi' in *Les Illuminations de la Mecque*, Paris, 1988; Claude Addas, *Ibn 'Arabi ou la quête du Soufre Rouge*, Paris, 1989; 'Abd ar-Razzaq Yahya, *L'Esprit Universel de l'Islam*, Algiers, 1989; William Chittick, *The Sufi Path of Knowledge*, State University of New York, 1989.
2. This statement should receive fuller treatment. Meanwhile, [redacted] M. Chodkiewicz's observations in the introduction to *Les Illuminations* (pp. 24–5 and 29) on the composition of the *Futûhât*, or the correspondence between the number of the *manâzil* and that of the *sûrahs* of the Qur'an.
3. At the end of the Ummayad era and the beginning of [redacted] Abbasid, *adab*, while still endowed with very strong ethical meaning in the works of a certain Ibn al-Muqaffa', takes on the meaning of 'knowing', relating [redacted] the [redacted] time to action and living. It is progressively reduced, in one of its meanings, to [redacted] of *belles-lettres* and literature. Reduction though it is, this evolution [redacted] least initially [redacted] the double idea of embracing the [redacted] of knowledge (or of [redacted] [redacted] of knowledge) and that of being [redacted] [redacted] use it advisedly in any circumstances. Given [redacted] very frequent [redacted] which [redacted] be made of this word, it will henceforth be given only in transliteration.
4. *Al-adîb* [redacted]*'a limâ fîhi min al-sa'a*. Ibn 'Arabi here [redacted] the generally pejorative meaning of *ima'a*, 'One who is with everyone', into [redacted] positive meaning.
5. This [redacted] seems not to [redacted] located in the best-known collections. 'Abd [redacted] al-Sulami (d. 412H) quotes it in more developed form, [redacted] with [redacted] [redacted] [redacted]

> According to Shaqiq, according [redacted] (Ibn Mas'ud), the Envoy of God – Grace and Peace upon him – said: 'God has instilled *adab* within me, and has perfected it in me, since He [redacted] commanded me [redacted] observe the noble characteristics, saying: "Show yourself forbearing, command the good [redacted] away from the ignorant." ' (Qur'an 7:199) (*Jâmi* [redacted] *al-sûfiyya*, ed. E. Kohlberg, Jerusalem, 1976, p. 3.)

Sam'ani (m. 562), sometimes quoted [redacted] reference for [redacted] *hadîth*, reports it with [redacted] different *isnâd*, though including Sulami [redacted] its transmitters; cf. [redacted] *al-imlâ' wa 'l-istimlâ'*, ed. Weisweiler, Leiden, 1952, p. 1. Nallino mentions another version after the *Nihâya* of Ibn al-Athir; cf. *La Littérature arabe* [redacted] *origines* [redacted] *l'époque de la dynastie umayyade*.

6. Notably Qur'an 20:114 and 23:116: [redacted] be Allah, the King, the True One,' or 22:62: 'That is because Allah [redacted] the King, the True One, [redacted] which they invoke, which falls short of Him, is the false.' In post-Quranic and post-prophetic usage, *al-haqq* also [redacted] 'God' in relation to the creatures (*al-khalq*). This usage [redacted] from the aspect of transcendence in the above verses [redacted] accordingly from the separative function of the *haqq*. One *hadîth*, nonetheless, [redacted] a relation between the Divine True One and the Muhammadian Reality. The Prophet said of himself: 'Whoever sees me (in a dream) has truly seen me,' or 'has [redacted] The Truth' (*man rà'âni faqad ra'â 'l-haqq*). It [redacted] worth noting that in all the versions of this *hadîth*, *al-haqq* is specifically used. Cf. Bukhari, *Ta'bîr*, 10, IX, 42–3; Muslim, *Ru'ya*, 11, VII, [redacted] (Istanbul edition 1332H); Darimi, *Ru'ya*, 4, II, 124; Ibn Hanbal, *Musnad*, III, 55.
7. Cf. Qur'an 2:119 and 35:24: 'We have sent you according to [redacted] Truth, [redacted] an announcer [redacted] warner,' and especially 17:105: 'According to the Truth We have brought it down and We have [redacted] you only as [redacted] announcer [redacted] warner.' The following verse is linked: 'And as [redacted] Qur'an which We have [redacted] up [redacted] you may recite it with pauses to men, and We have brought it down in a repeated manner' (*wa qur'ân faraqnâhu li-taqra'ahu 'ala 'l-nâsi 'ala mukthin wa nazzalnâhu tanzîlan*). '*Wa qur'ânan*' refers to 'it descended', but there is nothing to prevent it from referring equally to the Prophet in his inner and universal reality. Moreover, the expression 'with pauses' concerns the *adab* instilled by God in the Prophet so that the passage may come about from the unified form (*qur'ân*) to the separated form (*furqân*) of Revelation. We [redacted] [redacted] to this question [redacted] [redacted] [redacted] of the article. Let [redacted] also note, concerning the first verse that Qurtubi [redacted] thus: 'Into Muhammad or upon him, [redacted] is said, "I [redacted] down [redacted] Zayd's" ' (i.e. Zayd's house – tr.) (*nazaltu bi-zayd*) (*al-Jami' li-ahkam al-qur'an*, X, 339). Other [redacted] of the Qur'an [redacted] [redacted] to identify the Prophet with *al-haqq*, [redacted] here in the *Sûrah* 'Muhammad': 'And they believed in that which was brought down upon Muhammad, [redacted] [redacted] [redacted] (or it is) the Truth from their Lord . . .' (47:2). In his 'Prayer [redacted] the Prophet' Ibn 'Arabi identifies him with the Qur'an in [redacted] two aspects: 'Upon the *Qur'an* which contains the [redacted] manifested and [redacted] non-manifestable, and upon the *Furqân* of the Distinction which discriminates between the ephemeral and [redacted] eternal . . .' (tr. M. Valsan in *Études Traditionnelles*, 1974, p. 246).
8. The particle *bi* of *bi-l-haqq* has an instrumental or locative meaning.
9. Died 536/1141. [redacted] EI², III 754–55 for information [redacted] him, and [redacted] *al-haqq*

al-makhlûq bihi, cf. *Futûhât*, II, 60, 104; III, 77, 354, 416.

10. We must doubtless see in this point an indication of the difference between *adab al-haqq* and *adab al-haqîqa* – between the *adab* of Revelation and of the prophets, and that of the saints.
11. As in Qur'an 4:78: 'Say, all comes from God . . .' and 91:8: 'He inspires in it (the soul) its corrupt practices and its pious fear.'
12. In treatises of *tasawwuf* this question is dealt with in a variety of the relation between *Shari'a* and *haqîqa*. Cf. chs. [illegible] and 263 of the *Futûhât*, translated by Michel Valsan (*Études Traditionnelles*, 1966, pp. 206–17). We shall then refer to this translation and to its very illuminating [illegible]. M. Valsan translates in a note [illegible] which forms the foundation of the *haqq–haqîqa* relationship. The Prophet [illegible] a companion how he was, [illegible] the latter replied: 'This morning, I find myself truly (*haqqan*) believing.' The Prophet pointed [illegible] to him: 'To every true thing there corresponds a profound reality (*haqîqa*). What is the reality of your faith?' The companion replied that he felt absolute detachment from this world and had the vision of the Resurrection and the Hereafter. In other words, the initiatory [illegible] and resurrection [illegible] taken place. We have [illegible] found elsewhere the version of the [illegible] translated by M. Valsan. Another, very similar but shorter, is quoted in the *Futûhât*, III, 541, ch. 389. It is found, with some variants, in manuals of *tasawwuf*, e.g. *The Luma'* by Sarraj, Cairo, 1960, p. 30. Junayd quoted extracts [illegible] of a known tradition: 'Every word has its profound truth' (*li-kulli qawl haqîqa*). Cf. *Majma' al-zawâ'id*, re-edited Beirut 1967, 1, pp. 57–8; see also al-Kandihlawi, *Hayât al-sahâba*, Damascus, 1969, III, pp. 430–31. It [illegible] interesting [illegible] look again [illegible] the definition which the *Lisan al-'arab* gives of *haqîqa*: 'That which a thing must achieve, such [illegible] it really is, [illegible] requires [illegible] become' (*mâ yasîru ilayhi haqq al-amr* [illegible] *wujûbuhu*). This is akin to the meaning of *ta'wîl* (see below). M. Valsan proposed translating *haqq* and *haqîqa* [illegible] 'immediate truth' [illegible] 'last truth'.
13. On this verse, see below.
14. Cf. Qur'an 10:30: 'They are [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] Allah, their master, [illegible] True One.' The following verses (32 and 33) repeat the word *haqq* several times over, and verse 39 says of those who do not believe in Revelation: 'They have treated that [illegible] lie, knowledge of which they could not encompass, while the [illegible] meaning (*ta'wîl*) of it has [illegible] yet reached them.' *Adab* in interpretation of the Qur'an is, then, [illegible] wait for [illegible] *ta'wîl*.
15. *Mundzala* [illegible] 'meeting halfway between God and man [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] point where [illegible] divine "descent" and the "ascent" of [illegible] [illegible] concur,' M. Chodkiewicz, Introduction [illegible] *Illuminations de la Mecque*, p. 30, [illegible] *Futûhât*, III, 118.
16. *Al-sûrah al-imâmiyya*: The *sûrah* [illegible] *Sîn*, [illegible] reference [illegible] verse 12, 'And [illegible] have numbered every thing in [illegible] manifest archetype (*imâm mubîn*).' This [illegible] generally regarded [illegible] the Guarded Tablet or the Heavenly Exemplar of The Book. For Ibn 'Arabi it [illegible] the *Insân al-kâmil* insofar [illegible] he contains the archetype and the enumeration of all things, by bringing together and separation; cf. Souad Hakim, '*al-mu'jâm al sûfi*', pp. 111–13. [illegible] [illegible] or [illegible] *insân*: 'O man!' is [illegible] of the names of the Prophet as universal man. He is called, in the prayer on the Prophet, 'He who numbers the five divine excellencies'; 'and We [illegible] numbered

every thing in ■ manifest archetype'; ■ fifth ■ 'total' ■ 'unifying excellence' (*al-hadrat al-jâmi'a*). Cf. *Études Traditionnelles*, 1974, ■ 242–3.

17. It seems that this phrase belongs to ■ ■ in which the Prophet announces ■ his companions that ■ has seen his Lord: 'In the most beautiful of forms'. God ■ him a question which he is unable to answer, and inspires him with the ■ by striking him with ■ ■ between the shoulders; 'and I ■ ■ ■ of His fingers in my breast,' ■ the Prophet, adding the phrase: ■ every thing manifested to me, and I knew,' (Ibn Hanbal, *Musnad*, V, 243). This knowledge ■ expressed in different ways in the rather numerous versions of ■ *hadîth*, but not in the form quoted by Ibn 'Arabi, albeit the phrase does belong to the tradition. (It is not found in any of the references shown by O. Yahya in his edition of the *Futûhât*, II, p. 510). On the knowledge of 'First and Last', ■ A. Yahya, *L'Esprit Universel de l'Islam*, ch. XXI.
18. Cf. for example Bukhari, *Tafsîr*, *Sûrah* 17, VI, 105 (at the beginning of a long ■ ■ the intercession of the Prophet). See also references in *Concordances et Indices de* ■ *tradition musulmane*, III, 17.
19. Part of ■ well-known *hadîth qudsî*. Cf. Bukhari, *Raqâ'iq*, ■ *al-tawâdu'* VIII, 131 ■ *Al-ahâdîth al-qudsiyya*, Cairo, 1969, I, pp. 81–4.
20. *Yufassilu ijmâlahu bi-suwarihi wa yujimilu tafsîlahu bi-dhâtihi.*
21. Cf. Ibn Maja, *Sunan*, zuhd 4, ed. Abd al Baqi, p. 1379: 'According ■ Asma' ■ Yazid, she heard the Envoy of God – Grace and Peace be upon him – say: ■ I ■ tell you who ■ the ■ ■ you?" "Yes, O Prophet of God!" "The best among you are those who, when one sees them, make one mention God (or: remember God) – may He ■ exalted." '
22. This is the principal meaning of *futuwwa*; cf. *Futûhât*, II, 231–4, ch. 146.
23. Cf. Darimi, *Sunan*, *fadâ'il al-qur'an*, 1, II, 422. Here is the ■ of this ■ reported by Ibn Mas'ûd: 'I know nothing more unworthy than ■ house in which there is nothing of the Word of God. The heart which contains nothing of the Word of God, goes to ruin like ■ house in which no one lives.'
24. See on this subject the article by Michel Chodkiewicz, 'La Lettre et la Loi', Symposium ■ *Mystique, culture* ■ *société*, Paris Sorbonne, Michel Mealine, Paris, 1983.
25. God, by the voice of the Qur'an. The reader will note that in Arab countries the term *Mu'addib* generally means the headmaster of ■ Quranic school.

■ The ■ words have the same meaning, except that the second is used in the Qur'an: 'And He is with you wherever you ■ be' (57:4). Mention of this verse is not limited to ■ question of *adab* in respect for the letter, but suggests also that the knowledge that He is with us is ■ strong prompt to respect *adab* towards Him.

27. An allusion, doubtless, to the inspired character of ■ *Futûhât*.
28. Ibn 'Arabi considers the *shatahât* or 'theopathic utterance' ■ stemming from a remaining trace of 'grossness' of soul (*ru'ûnat nafs*) and from a certain lack of *adab*. See *Futûhât*, I, 276, ch. 52; II, 104, question (of Tirmidhi) 107; II, 387–88, ch. 185; II, 232, ch. 146.
29. These two expressions mean that Revelation and the Law must first of all penetrate the innermost being of the Envoys (we shall see the illustration of this on the subject of the 'character' of the Prophet) before being clarified by their teaching.

This phrase is part of an invocation uttered by the Prophet in the evening prayer (*qiyâm al-layl*): ' . . . (Qur'an 6:79 and 162–3) *Allâhumma*, Thou King, there is no God except Thee. Thou art my Lord and I am Thy servant. I have injustice to myself and recognize my sin. Forgive me my sins – none pardons sin but Thee. Guide me towards the best of characters – none removes but Thee. I am Thine, behold I am Thine, Thou with Whom the happiness (*labbayyka wa sa'dayka*). I am by Thee, to Thee. exalted Thou. I Thee for pardon and return, repentant, to Thee.' (Muslim, *Sahîh*, *al-du'â fi salât al-layl*, II 185.) This in part an example of the of the Prophet invocation; it in part places good and evil in relation to the characters.

31. above, 21.

32. these two traditions, see the translation of the chapter of the *shari'a* (above, note 11). The is reported by in *Muwatta'*, *husn al-khuluq* 8; with the commentary by Suyuti, *Tanwir al-hawâlik*, III 97, and by Ibn Hanbal, *Musnad*, II (respectively *al-akhlâq* and *hasan al-akhlâq* *al-akhlâq*). The is reported in numerous *hadiths* mentioning the privileges of the Prophet, the following:

> I excel in merit the other prophets by six things: I have received the reunificative words; I have succoured by fear (cast into the hearts of enemies); booty has been made licit to me; the earth been made an oratory for me and means of purification; I have been the creatures, by the prophets have been sealed. The prophets I like this parable: a man built a palace; he had completed and perfected it, except for the placing of brick. When they the palace, cried: 'How beautiful is this building, if only this brick completed it.' Is it not I who brick, it not I who that brick? (Ibn Hanbal, *Musnad*, II, 411–12)

For other, shorter versions, *Concordances* *Indices*, VI, 58.

33. Cf. 29.

34. This word of 'Aisha sometimes reported with other context; cf. Ibn Hanbal, *Musnad*, VI, 163, 188, 216. It forms the commonest part of a longer

> A *tâbi'i* grandson of of the martyrs of Uhud, b.Hisham b. 'Amir, betook himself to Medina and declared to group of Ansâr that repudiated wife, was going to sell land which owned at Medina in order devote himself to fighting in the way of God. The Ansâr answered him that six of them had wanted to do that, but that Prophet had forbidden them, quoting the verse: 'There is certainly beautiful example you in the Envoy of God' (33:21). Next, Sa'd questioned Ibn 'Abbas on way in which Prophet prayed the *witr*; latter him to 'Aisha. Sa'd addressed her thus: 'O Mother of believers, tell me what was the character of the Prophet? – Grace and Peace upon him.' 'Do you not read the Qur'an?' she replied. 'Yes!' 'The character of the Prophet of God, Grace and be him, was the Qur'an.' 'I wanted that moment', Sa'd, 'to rise and till I anyone anything again. Then I thought again. Tell me,' I asked, 'what was the evening prayer of the Prophet? – Grace and Peace be upon him.' 'Do you not read: "O Thou Who wrappest Thyself in

> cloak?" ' (*Sûrah* 73) 'Yes!' 'Aisha then spoke of the circumstances of [redacted] revelation of that *Sûrah* and answered another question from Sa'd on the *witr*. She ended by saying: 'I am not aware of the Prophet ever having recited the whole Qur'an in one night, nor that he ever spent a whole night in prayer until the dawn prayer, nor that he fasted a whole month other than Ramadân.'

Version of Muslim *musâfirîn*, 139, II, 169; cf. also Abu Dawud, *Sunan*, *tatawwu'*, 26, II [redacted] No. 1341; Nasa'i, *Sunan*, *qiyâm al-layl 2, III, 99; Darimi, Sunan*, *salât*, 165, III 345; Ibn Hanbal VI 54 and [redacted] (in this version, it [redacted] 'Aisha who counsels him not to [redacted] himself to celibacy). All the teaching of Sayyidi Muhyi 'l-Din can [redacted] in this *hadîth*: Understanding [redacted] Qur'an through the reality of the Prophet, [redacted] approaching that reality by the Qur'an [redacted] practice (recitation in [redacted] night prayer). 'Aisha [redacted] here with all her [redacted] a spiritual master, instilling in her disciples the *adab* of her [redacted]

Another version, in which 'Aisha again plays a pre-eminent role, although very different, again refers [redacted] back to the Qur'an and illustrates the excellence of the Prophet's character in his married life (this [redacted] far towards explaining the ban on celibacy):

> A man of the Banû Sû'a reports: 'I asked 'Aisha, "Tell me about the charac-[redacted] of the Prophet." "Do you [redacted] the Qur'an?" she replied, "And you are according to a magnificent character? The Envoy of God – Grace [redacted] be upon him – was with his companions. I had prepared a dish for him, and so had Hafsa. As she had finished before me, I said to [redacted] servant: 'Go quickly and drop her dish.' The other [redacted] going to place the [redacted] before the Envoy of God. She jostled her. The [redacted] broke [redacted] the food [redacted] spilled. The Envoy of God picked it all up, put it onto the leather [redacted] mat and they [redacted] He next [redacted] for my [redacted] it [redacted] Hafsa, saying: 'Take this [redacted] in place of yours and [redacted] what is in it.' I [redacted] nothing", [redacted] 'Aisha, "appear on the face of the Envoy of God – Grace and Peace be upon him." '
>
> (Version of Ibn Mâja, *Sunan*, [redacted] 14, p. 782 No. 2333; cf. also Ibn Hanbal, VI 111.

35. Cf. A. Yahya, *Esprit Universel de l'Islam*, p. 113.
36. Cf. Bukhari, *adhân/salât*, 89; Muslim, *salât*, 204, etc.
37. Cf. Ibn Hanbal, *Musnad*, II, 298, and *Concordances et Indices*, IV, 283.
38. [redacted] note 30.
39. Allusion to Qur'an 53:3–4.
40. We have not found [redacted] reference [redacted] this word of Abu Bakr. Abu Nu'aym gives a similar version of it: ' 'Abu Bakr fell ill. To those who came to visit him and suggested, "Why do you not call [redacted] doctor?" he replied: "He has already examined me." "What did he say?" "I do as I wish." ' (cf. Qur'an 11:107 and 85:16). Cf. *Hilyat al-awliyâ*, I, 34; Ibn Hanbal, *Kitâb al-zuhd*, new edition, Beirut, 1976, p. 113. We also find this reply attributed to Abu l-Darda: 'Why not call [redacted] doctor?' 'It [redacted] He who [redacted] confined [redacted] [redacted] bed.' Cf. al-Kandihlawi, *Hayât al-sahâba*, III, 195–6.
41. [redacted] also *Futûhât*, II, 343 and III, 246, ch. 354, [redacted] which [redacted] 'Arabi gives an example of himself: 'A pain afflicted my arm. I addressed my complaint [redacted] God,

as Jacob did – Peace upon him – by *adab* towards God, in order not to resist the divine constraint in the way of certain people who, by ignorance of God, [illegible] people of total submission (*taslîm*) and abandonment [illegible] God (*tafwîd*), [illegible] thus show [illegible] double ignorance.'

42. The *umanâ'* (sing. *amîn*) [illegible] the élite of the *malâmiyya* (on [illegible] cf. *Le Sceau des Saints*, [illegible] 136–8 and 218–19; Cf. *Futûhât*, II, 20, ch. 73 and III, 14–15. This [illegible] derives from a [illegible] 'Each community [illegible] its faithful depository and [illegible] of [illegible] community is Abu 'Ubadya Ibn al-Jarrah'; cf. Bukhari, [illegible] *al-nabî*, 53–5, and *Concordances et Indices*, I, 11.
43. One of the masters of Iraq, [illegible] contemporary of Junayd who died after him (beginning of fourth/tenth century). Following this test, [illegible] named himself 'The Impostor' (*al-Kadhdhâb*). Cf. Sulami, *Tabaqât al-sûfiyya*, Cairo, [illegible] pp. 195–9; Abu Nu'aym, *Hilyat al-awliyâ*, X, 309–11.
44. Cf. A. Yahya, *L'Esprit Universel de l'Islam*, p. 33.
45. This companion said of himself: 'People used to ask the Prophet questions about good. I used [illegible] him about evil, for fear that it would [illegible] me.' Cf. [illegible] al-Jawzi, *Sifat al-safwa*, I, 610. The Prophet, apart from indications of [illegible] troubles [illegible] [illegible] (*fitan*), had entrusted to him the name of 'The Hypocrites', which [illegible] [illegible] this adopted name. On him, cf. Bukhari, [illegible] [illegible] *al-nabî*, V, 31–2, [illegible] [illegible] his explanation cf. *Futûhât*, II, 584, ch. 273.
46. Ibn 'Arabi defines sainthood, [illegible] or angelic, [illegible] succour (*nusra*) brought to God, conformably with the concomitance in the Qur'an of the two divine [illegible] *al-walî* and *al-nasîr*. Cf. M. Chodkiewicz, *Le* [illegible] *des Saints*, [illegible] 41–2.
47. The first Word was uttered by the Prophet in answer [illegible] companions who were surprised by his accepting the request to perform the funeral prayer for the chief of the Hypocrites, 'Abdallah b. Ubayy b. Salul, and referred to Qur'an 9:80: 'Ask forgiveness for them, or do not; even if you ask forgiveness for them seventy times, God will not forgive [illegible] . . .'; cf. Tabari, *Jâmi' al-bayân*, ed. M.M. Shâkir, XIV, 394–7. The second is [illegible] of a curse uttered for [illegible] time by [illegible] Prophet in the *qunût* of the dawn prayer against certain enemies of [illegible] [illegible] certain tribes, including these three; cf. Muslim, *Masâjid*, 294, II, 134–5. These three tribes of the Banu Sulaym had treacherously attacked [illegible] Bi'r Ma'ûna, shortly after the battle of Uhud, [illegible] party of forty Muslims who had [illegible] to teach Islam to tribes of the Najd; cf. Ibn Hisham, *al-sîra al-nabawiyya*, Cairo, 1955, III, 184–5. The Prophet stopped the curse when it was revealed to [illegible] 'Nothing of this [illegible] belongs [illegible] you: leave it to God to make them repent [illegible] [illegible] chastise them, for they are unjust' (Qur'an 3:128).
48. Cf. Qur'an 10:90. On this tradition, cf. Tabari, *Jâmi' al-bayân*, XV, 190–93.
49. Cf. Ibn Hisham, *al-Sîra al-nabawiyya*, II, 416.
50. Allusion to [illegible] [illegible] *qudsî*. Cf. Bukhari, *Tawhîd*, IX, 165: 'When [illegible] decreed [illegible] creation, [illegible] wrote [illegible] [illegible] Himself, above [illegible] Throne: "My [illegible] [illegible] preceded My Anger," ' and [illegible] Mâja, *Muqaddima* 13, I, 67, No. 189: 'Your Lord prescribed for Himself, with His own hand, before He created the creation: "My mercy has preceded My anger." ' Other versions read: 'has prevailed over', cf. *al-Ahâdîth al-qudsiyya*, I, 230–31.
51. Qurtubi reports about [illegible] verse, following Muslim, [illegible] tradition according [illegible] which the Prophet recited this prayer of Abraham on the matter of idols:

> Lord, they have [illegible] many men astray. He who follows me, is of my people, [illegible] to him who disobeys, Thou are the Most Forgiving, the Most Merciful! (Qur'an 14:36) and recited also the Word of Jesus. Then, raising his arms, he begged, 'My God, my community!' and wept. [illegible] then said: 'O Gabriel, go [illegible] find Muhammad and ask him what [illegible] making him weep.' He ascertained this and God sent him back, saying: 'O Gabriel, [illegible] find [illegible] say to him: "We shall give you satisfaction for your community, [illegible] give you [illegible] sorrow." ' (*al-Jâmi' li-ahkâm al-qur'ân*, VI, 379)

52. Cf. *Futûhât*, I, 562–3; II, 149, ch. 72; 265, ch. 163; III, 219, ch. 351; IV, 169–71, ch. 527; [illegible] (*hadrat al-ghinâ'*).
53. Allusion [illegible] the tradition: 'I am close to those whose [illegible] are broken because of Me.' The origin of this tradition is difficult to determine. Ibn 'Arabi quotes it elsewhere [illegible] simple *khabar*, and [illegible] on it; cf. *Futûhât*, IV, 103, ch. 471. 'Ajluni [illegible] content simply to quote it, after 'Ali al-Qari, Ghazali, with the addition: 'And I [illegible] close to those whose hearts [illegible] effaced because of Me;' *Kashf al-khafâ*, I, 203, No. 614.
54. Cf. Qur'an 7:32: 'Say, Who has forbidden God's adornment, which He has brought about for His servants, and the good things with which He [illegible] provided them?'
55. [illegible] order to understand the meaning of the 'balance', we [illegible] that these two verses [illegible] taken from the *Sûrah al-Rahmân*, which begins thus: 'The All-Merciful. He taught the Qur'an. [illegible] created man,' placing the teaching and creation parallel. In verses 7–10, the balance is mentioned three times, between the creation of heaven and that of earth, as if to maintain balance between them. We may then consider it as an aspect of the *haqq* in the function of equilibrium which man is charged to maintain by observance of the Divine Word. *Adab* [illegible] in its [illegible] maintain this 'balance' in the least word [illegible] gesture, in imitation of the Prophet.
56. *Bi-jam'ihi bayna 'l-diddayn*. He next recited the verse: 'He is The First and The Last, The Outer and The Inner . . .' cf. *Futûhât*, I, 184, ch. 24; II, 40 q. 1; 379 ch. 188; 512, ch. 219; 660, ch. 292; III, 317, ch. 364; IV, 40, ch. 427.
57. [illegible] *yahtammu bi-dhâlika illâ kullu mutasharri'* [illegible] *'ânaga 'l-adab* [illegible] *'arafa qadr* [illegible] *shuri'a lahu min dhâlika*.
58. This qualifier means, in Qur'an 3:7, those who have permanent recollection of God's Word (*wa mâ yadhdhakkaru illâ ulû 'l-albâb*) whether they know [illegible] interpretation of it [illegible] leave the [illegible] to God, according to the [illegible] readings of [illegible] verse. See the following note.
59. *Ta'wîl* is the *masdar* of the verb *awwala* – to make something reach its end; it is the factitive form of *âla-y'âlu* – to reach its end (*ma'âl*). The [illegible] Arabic roots often carry opposite and complementary meanings, and this root is also that of *awwal* – first, or, beginning – which confers on *ta'wîl* a meaning at [illegible] eschatological and cyclic. It is, however, the former which generally prevails in the Qur'an, for example: 'We have brought them a book which [illegible] have explained in detail according to [illegible] knowledge, as guidance [illegible] mercy for those who believe. Are they waiting only for its final advent (*ta'wîlahu*)? [illegible] the day it arrives, those who previously forgot [illegible] shall say: "The Envoys of [illegible] Lord brought [illegible] the truth . . ." ' (7:52–3). In [illegible] *Sûrah Yûsuf*, *ta'wîl* means [illegible] interpretation of the dream which announces an event to come. As to verse 3:7, the

eschatological connotation of the interpretation is confirmed, negatively in the case of 'those in whose hearts there is a deviation,' and for whom *ta'wîl* is a speculation on the future; and positively in the case of the *ulû 'l-albâb* who await the resurrection (vv.8 and 9, compare with verses 190–94 at the end of *Sûrah al-'Imrân*).

60. The [illegible] commented on above belong [illegible] *al-Qiyâma* (the Resurrection). This treats first of individual and bodily resurrection, and then of the phases of the posthumous evolution of man, returning then [illegible] his last [illegible] in this [illegible] to his first creation, proof of resurrection. To [illegible] this [illegible] on the Qur'an in the middle of the *Sûrah* is difficult to explain, but it is in fact the key [illegible] it.
61. On the relation between the two Seals, see *Le Sceau des Saints*, ch. IX.
62. Cf. Qur'an 20:114: 'Exalted be Allah, The King, The True One. Do not hasten the coming of the Qur'an before revelation of it is decreed [illegible] you, and say: "Lord, make me grow in knowledge." '
63. To reveal [illegible] etymologically, 'to [illegible] again [illegible] a veil' (*velum*).
64. [illegible] the commentary [illegible] in Tabari, *Jâmi' al-bayân*, ed. Bulaq, XXIX, 117–19.
65. Mention of the Lord (*al-rabb*) is no doubt [illegible] allusion to [illegible] of its traditional interpretations, bringing together the roots '*rbb*' and '*rbw*' – he who makes [illegible] grow, and thus, who educates (*al-murabbî*), [illegible] of the [illegible] of the [illegible] This passage of the *Futûhât* is also translated [illegible] commented on by A. Yahya, *L'Esprit Universel* [illegible] *l'Islam*, pp. 107–8. For the meaning of *wajh khâss*, [illegible] the whole of ch. XIX, 'inspiration [illegible] révélation coranique'.
66. Cf. Ibn 'Arabi, *Les Illuminations de la Mecque*, p. 628, note 283.
67. See commentary on this verse in *Futûhât*, II 98, quest. 94.
68. *Futûhât*, III, 329, tr. by Michel Chodkiewicz, *Les Sceau des Saints*, p. 144.

Knowledge of God in Ibn 'Arabi'

SOUAD HAKIM

To know God is the [redacted] of every Sufi, [redacted] transmitted by those who are leaving to those who remain and those who [redacted] to [redacted] It is [redacted] if the Sufis [redacted] whole, in spite of the variety of their methods and the distance apart of their countries, had participated in the same [redacted] of knowing (*'irfân*). This one traces a line, that one [redacted] a colour, [redacted] third invents [redacted] image, [redacted] fourth casts shadows, etc. In spite of this, the Sufi act of knowing remains one and indivisible, is transmitted and fulfilled – but has appeared in Ibn 'Arabi in its most perfected form; as if all the allusions, relating to knowledge, of his precursors, had been rivers with knowledge of their courses towards Ibn 'Arabi and had followed them.

I would say, and advisedly, that if the experience of his precursors is summed up by the formula, 'The attributes of the hearts in the attitude to the Beloved' (*sifât al qulûb fi mu'âmalat al mahbûb*), then the coming of Ibn 'Arabi overturned Sufi norms, and brought objectives into [redacted] open. This is why, if [redacted] parallel this [redacted] in flood, which is the work of the Greatest Master, with the work of the preceding six centuries, [redacted] can [redacted] it up in the formula, 'The way of the hearts [redacted] the gnosis of [redacted] Beloved' (*najh al qulûb fi ma'ârifat al mahbûb*).

Although the theory of Sufi gnosis had made its appearance [redacted] [redacted] precursors, their texts have still remained insufficient and inadequate, qualitatively and quantitatively, for working into an overview – until Ibn 'Arabi arrived, whose work contained the understanding in fragmentary form, and the allusions in scattered form. And whoever [redacted] to know in depth any of his theories must acquire all the Sufi qualities, from patience (*sabr*) to love (*mahabba*), until he [redacted] mastered all the elements of the theory he seeks.

The aim of this research is to study human understanding in Ibn 'Arabi; in other words, it consists in bringing to light how the disciple realizes gnosis of God. In order to reach this objective, I have divided my research into four parts, each one of which deals with one subject. In the first two parts, I have studied the instruments of human understanding, beginning with intellect (*'aql*) and its operations in the process of understanding. It has been stated that intellect [redacted] five faculties (*quwwa*), each of which is endowed with a mechanism by which [redacted] acquires understanding; these faculties [redacted] at the service of the intellect. [redacted] the writings of Ibn 'Arabi have demonstrated in the plainest [redacted] possible, that none of these faculties is capable of gnosis

of God, and that there is another faculty, beyond intellect. Here, I have [illegible] his writings in order [illegible] be [illegible] give [illegible] clear picture of the [illegible] of his system of knowledge with [illegible] its capacities and mechanisms; that is [illegible] say, the intellect, its faculties [illegible] mechanisms, and the heart, which is beyond intellect.

In the second part, I have tested the capacity (*taqa*) of [illegible] instruments of knowledge. This experiment takes place only when the instruments of understanding confront their object; in other words, do the instru- [illegible] of human understanding have what [illegible] required for gnosis of God? What do they have gnosis of? What [illegible] the limits of their knowledge? At this point, [illegible] second part [illegible] into two sections. The first studies the capacity of the human species for understanding; the second studies the limits of individual specific understanding. This second section (limits of individual understanding) will allow us [illegible] from the theoretical to [illegible] 'experimental'; I say experimental because the research [illegible] have undertaken to this point has answered questions of the sort: by what do [illegible] know? What [illegible] the mechanisms of knowledge and understanding? What are the limits of human understanding? How far does God, who is the object of knowledge, accept being known by a created understanding? Instead of all [illegible] questions, this research will now ask the question, 'How do we know God?', and the 'how' is [illegible] experimental question, for [illegible] know the 'how' only by experimentation.

Answering the question 'how?', [illegible] reach the fourth part of this research, which is the part on 'realization' – the study of the 'means' of realization is the 'great trouble', for the phenomenon veils the 'how'. How does man, from being a 'traveller' [illegible] the road of purity and devotion, become a gnostic (*'ârif*)? How does action (*'amal*) change to knowledge (*'ilm*)? How does devotion (*'ibâda*) change to understanding (*'irfân*)? Where does this transformation take place? How is the change brought about from the logic of intellect to the logic of the 'heart'? What is the [illegible] during which a philosophical or legal mind, or one involved in speculative theology, becomes a gnostic Sufi mind? This is what will be made clear [illegible] the fourth part.

In these four parts, I have thus studied [illegible] theory of knowledge and understanding in Ibn 'Arabi, from its birth with the intellect, and its instruments, stopping [illegible] the question of the understanding, and the aptitudes (*qâbiliya*), and [illegible] of human capacity, and on to the end where I tackle the question of the transformation of action [illegible] knowledge, and the transformation of devotion to understanding.

Now I have [illegible] plain the objective of this piece of research [illegible] well [illegible] its aim and work method. You [illegible] all specialists in Ibn 'Arabi, and I [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] today [illegible] go into detail [illegible] the methods I used in dealing with [illegible] texts, [illegible] in relating [illegible] sorts of material which occur in [illegible] one

text. All this is in my book, and the present essay is only a resumé of its results and discoveries.

Research into Ibn 'Arabi's theories changes from being a scientific to a personal question, and in that respect it is one of the very few writers. We ask ourselves about God, His existence, the truth of man and the universe, and this is a chance for us to stop at his writings; we ask them for answers; to know for ourselves how he thought, what he saw, letting his gnosis light up the road of our understanding with its own light, and letting it also rid our eyes of vision of the thousands of words which have piled up over the centuries, and which stand up before us depriving us of air and light.

THE STRUCTURE OF HUMAN KNOWLEDGE AND ITS MECHANISMS

Humankind enjoys a share in the faculty of intellect and its mechanisms, to the point where it is difficult to identify its birth in man. This leads philosophers to think that intellect is a specifically human phenomenon; it defines man as such, and differentiates him from other creatures. This has also led Ibn 'Arabi to think that intellect is one natural disposition (*fitra insâniyya*) amongst many others, and that only men and 'jinns' (*al jinn*) are endowed with mental faculties which allow them to acquire knowledge. In other words, for us the knowledge of the angels is innate, and that of the animals instinctive, human knowledge is not of one substance with man, and he must acquire it, God having endowed him only with means capable of successfully acquiring it.

Seeing that man is the only one endowed with faculties which allow him to acquire knowledge, let us look closer at these faculties in order to have a better idea, and, having understood the mechanism and functioning of each of these faculties, let us stop to study their capacity to know, and their limits.

The Spiritual Faculties of Knowledge and their Mechanisms

It is my view that the way in which our lungs breathe air while we are awake and asleep, resembles the way our intellect perceives images of known things. The intellect does not stop working for an instant. It is always engaged, be it in reflection, representation, imagination, perception or memorization. On its surface, images pass from light to dark, and it never leaves its post; we sleep, and our knowledge of the world sleeps with us, but at the surface of the unconscious, images

continue [redacted] file past, and at each [redacted] the intellect reveals itself as [redacted] centre of different mechanisms of knowledge, mechanisms which share the mind's time amongst themselves.

We [redacted] that the question of the intellect and its mechanisms does [redacted] occur much in the writings of Ibn 'Arabi, nor does it constitute one of his fundamental subjects [redacted] it has for the philosophers. [redacted] cept of the structure of the human intellect and its mechanisms [redacted] be summed up as follows: human intellect [redacted] incapable of producing knowledge because it is created with [redacted] simple nature. And of [redacted] different [redacted] of knowledge, it contains only those which [redacted] necessary; and all the knowledge which arises in it, arises in the way which is distinctive of one of the faculties which are [redacted] its service, having reached the mind by a mechanism which is proper to it. The faculties with their various mechanisms are [redacted] the service of the intellect. [redacted] faculty takes [redacted] its own questions, travels in its own universe and [redacted] to the intellect armed with [redacted] precise piece of learning. In all this the intellect is [redacted] than [redacted] judge, according to Ibn 'Arabi. It accepts or refuses, and no more.

The intellect thus appears, with its simple [redacted] and its necessary knowledges, [redacted] a centre for judgement, in whose service are faculties which function according to mechanisms whose number Ibn 'Arabi limits to five: reasoning faculty and mechanism of reasoning; memory faculty and mechanism of memory; faculty of imagination and mechanism of imagination; faculty of representation and mechanism of representation; sensory faculty and sensory mechanism. The sum of these faculties and their mechanisms is situated in the realm of the intellect, and is under its control. They are not the intellect.

If we study [redacted] mechanisms in the [redacted] of the Greatest Master, in order [redacted] learn what goes [redacted] in the intellect, [redacted] realize that the intellect [redacted] every [redacted] of its mechanisms. It needs the senses, for it could, for example, [redacted] know the colour yellow, or voices, if the mechanisms of the [redacted] did not endow it with knowledge. The intellect needs the senses as well [redacted] its other faculties. These faculties are arrayed in ascending order from lower to higher, and yet are interdependent, each higher faculty needing all the faculties lower than itself. Every time the activity of a mechanism is elevated, ennobled and made eminent, its need of the other mechanisms becomes [redacted] pressing; the senses, for example, need no other faculty, and the [redacted] elevated mechanism, reason, we are told, needs all the mechanisms inferior to itself [redacted] carry out its activity, i.e. for [redacted] [redacted] of reasoning to produce a logical–theoretical representation of [redacted] sort of question.

Time is [redacted] short for [redacted] to quote [redacted] 'Arabi's texts. We will content ourselves here with the following quotation: 'We have received knowledge that, by itself, intellect is not endowed with any knowledge, [redacted]

that which it acquires as knowledge [redacted] from [redacted] nature of receptivity which characterizes it.'

Having explained [redacted] of rational knowledge, the intellect and its five mechanisms in Ibn 'Arabi, [redacted] look with him [redacted] the capacity of these mechanisms for knowing God. He says in the Illuminations[2] in proof of the incapacity of the five faculties for knowledge of God:

> We shall never be able to apprehend the Creator, praised be He, by the senses; the imaginative faculty registers only what the [redacted] relay to it . . . as to [redacted] faculty of [redacted] (*quwwa mufikkira*) man never thinks of anything [redacted] the things which [redacted] in him, [redacted] between him and the things of which [redacted] thought [redacted] exists a relation, and there can [redacted] no relation between God and [redacted] We therefore cannot know God by the means distinctive of reason (*fikr*). The faculty of memory [redacted] apprehend the High God, for it memorizes only what the intellect [redacted] previously agreed to know, then it becomes distracted, and forgets. Thus, man's knowledge is limited, for he is equipped to know only what resembles him and what is identical to him, and nothing resembles the Creator, praised [redacted] He.

At this point in the essay, we may allow ourselves a pause, and question Ibn 'Arabi on his real position on the matter of reason (*fikr*), that is to say, with the intellect's reasoning faculty [redacted] the mechanism of reasoning, the mechanism used by theologians [redacted] build their religious theory. Why, according to Ibn 'Arabi can theological reasoning [redacted] be content with the Qur'an, drawing from there its primary materials to construct a religious theory?

Ibn 'Arabi does not utterly deny knowledge of God by reason, but he [redacted] this knowledge as a mix of religious matter, thoughts and intellect, [redacted] opposed to pure, prophetic religion; this religion composite albeit of 'high rank'. He [redacted] returns to the theme – using his arguments – of condemning the confidences (*mawajid*) and the [redacted] of the Sufis. It may be that his proofs [redacted] reach completion.

In Ibn 'Arabi, the philosophical and reasoning knowledge of the intellect is identified. This knowledge is limited to three subjects: knowledge of the existence of God, knowledge of His Unicity, and knowledge of what is obligatory. This third knowledge is indeed [redacted] negative knowledge, for the intellect distances from God what is [redacted] worthy of Him, without replacing the negation by new, positive instruction – these three knowledges are, then, the limits of intellect in Ibn 'Arabi, and what [redacted] after [redacted] theological–speculative thought in the realm of belief is only composite and impure knowledge.

Ibn 'Arabi's texts give [redacted] glimpse of his ban [redacted] intellect and reasoning in divine matters. [redacted] says: 'What reason has produced in the [redacted] of knowledge of God is not reliable. He says, also: 'Forsake reasoning and pay it no heed, for reasoning has [redacted] range proper to it, [redacted] it [redacted] no further.' He adds, demonstrating how [redacted] excludes the disciple (*murid*), from [redacted] will, 'Reasoning man is neither a man of [redacted] state, nor a man

of taste . . . and the "reasoner" is not one of the people of will, except where it is allowable [illegible] give oneself up [illegible] reasoning. Now, [illegible] of reason is [illegible] veil.'

[illegible] 'Arabi condemns having [illegible] the mechanisms of reasoning [illegible] well [illegible] its use [illegible] of divinity. According to Ibn 'Arabi, it [illegible] a [illegible] of reversal of the proper arrangement: instead of the faculty of reason being [illegible] service of intellect, so conforming [illegible] its human origin, intellect [illegible] become its prisoner. On this matter Ibn 'Arabi says: 'Amongst the [illegible] paradoxical things in the human sphere is the fact that man imitates his reason. God created this faculty to [illegible] intellect, but instead of that, intellect [illegible] – it is [illegible] strangest [illegible] which has appeared [illegible] Earth.'

We ask why Ibn 'Arabi thinks that reason does not reach to the knowledge of God, and why he prevents it from using [illegible] mechanisms in the study of the Qur'an, [illegible] the theologians have done. This is due, in my opinion, [illegible] two reasons which I put forward here. The first is that intellect to Ibn 'Arabi is [illegible] colossal force without limits, infinitely receptive to instruction, whatever instruction we give it, so long [illegible] [illegible] reason does [illegible] present obstacles, with its rules and limited logic. Now, for Ibn 'Arabi, what is incapable is [illegible] intellect but reason: This is contrary to what is repeated in almost [illegible] work [illegible] the Sufi theory of knowledge, where the [illegible] are considered [illegible] treating intellect like a chain from which it is needful [illegible] [illegible] free in order to acquire the knowledge of the heart. Ibn 'Arabi's [illegible] show us that intellect is not [illegible] chain, that it receives knowledge from instruction infinitely, [illegible] that [illegible] is reason which fetters it. This is why, according to Ibn 'Arabi, if we free the intellect from the constraint of [illegible] to which it [illegible] subject, it will change direction, seek another source of knowledge, and choose that instead.

Ibn 'Arabi [illegible] 'Intellects have [illegible] limit which they observe, as reasoners, not as acceptors.'

The second [illegible] is that I think Ibn 'Arabi denies reason (*fikr*) its capacity to detach from the partial to build [illegible] theory perfectly based on God. In other words, reason [illegible] its mechanisms in the understanding (*fahm*) of an image, recitation, decision, [illegible] any other partial question of [illegible] Qur'an. As [illegible] building a theory from [illegible] Quranic revelation, [illegible] is beyond its capacity, for reason is endowed with a logic, [illegible] will accept things which [illegible] with its logic, and reject what does not. If [illegible] wants [illegible] reason on any question [illegible] verse, [illegible] can. As [illegible] allowing one's reason [illegible] build a complete image of [illegible] divine belief from the Qur'an, Ibn 'Arabi [illegible] this, for the acquisition of [illegible] doctrinal image can only [illegible] inspiration.

Having inspected [illegible] system of human knowledge, [illegible] [illegible] stop and [illegible] that, if, for Ibn 'Arabi, intellectual, or philosophical reason [illegible] incapable of knowing God [illegible] an efficient way, and, if intellectual

theological reasoning in the Qur'an is incapable of building a doctrinal image without interpreting what does not with its logic, shall we be content with this knowledge of God? The answer is No. Ibn 'Arabi considers man has the office and obligation of Divine Knowledge, since the prophets have told him: 'Know your God'. The prophets know that he knows his God by intellect, that he knows Existence and Unicity, and what is worthy of him. This order from the prophets supposes a knowledge which surpasses acquired knowledge. Now, how is this knowledge to acquired when reason fettered? Ibn 'Arabi says:

> Amongst the things which the Lawmaker for man is 'Know your God' . . . And when he believed in the Prophet, he understood that beyond intellect there is something else which produces divine knowledge, which argumentation does not produce, indeed it shows the impossibility of its doing so for all. If understanding (*fahm*) arises, what this thing which is beyond intellect?

In this chapter of the Illuminations, Ibn 'Arabi says:

> When the intellects of the faithful that them know Him, when they already knew Him by their theoretical arguments, they confirm that there is another knowledge of God which they do not gain by reason (*fikr*) . . .

Let us question ourselves alongside Ibn 'Arabi as to what this thing is which is beyond intellect?

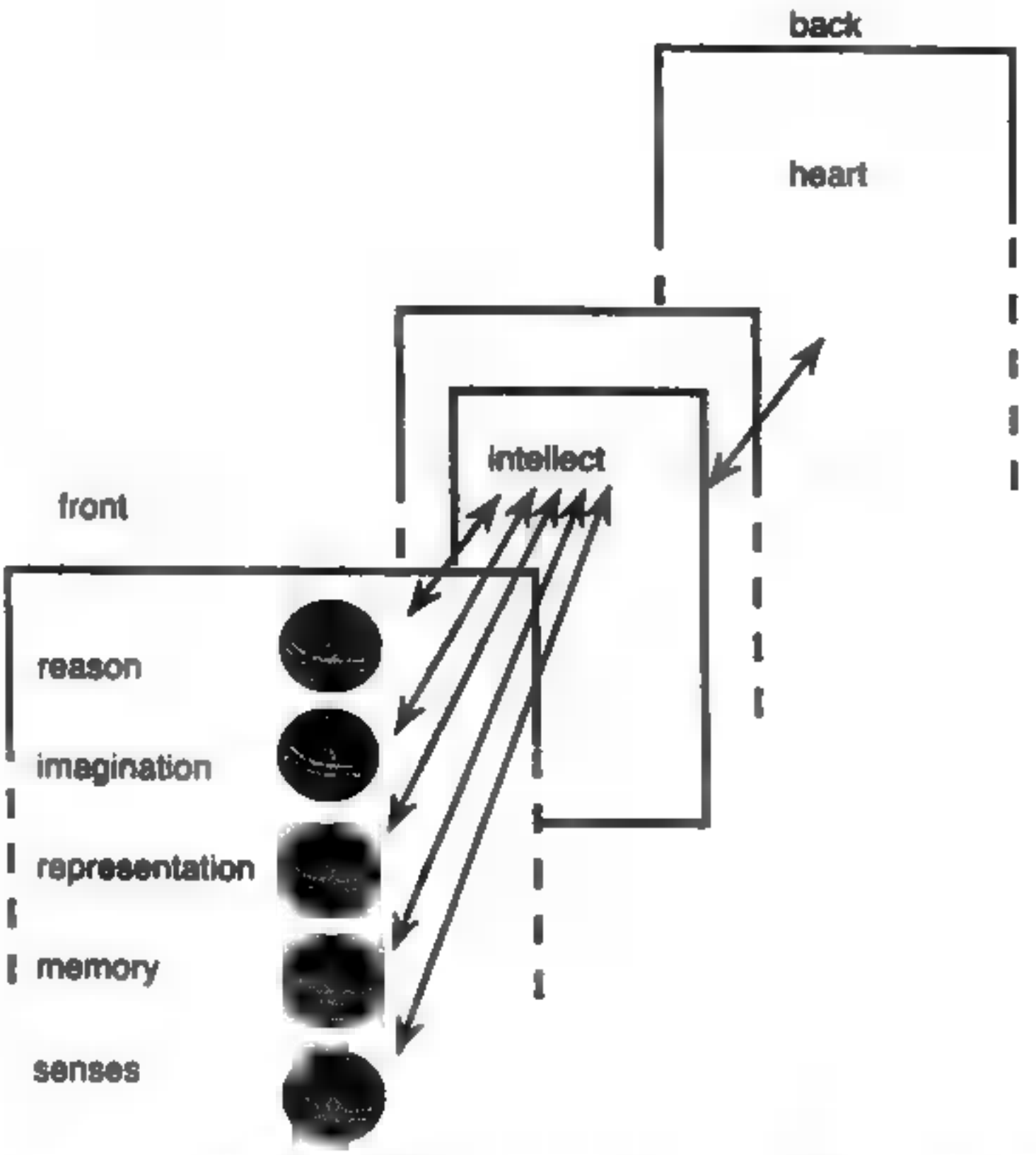
INTELLECT AND BEYOND INTELLECT

Intellect accepts the result of the reasoning faculty's activity just as it has been convinced by its human clauses, seeing that faculty can serve it better than reason, and that it knows only what comes under its cognizance. Nonetheless, if man points out to intellect that behind it there is faculty whose capacity exceeds that of the reasoning faculty, and that he instructed by it as by the reasoning faculty, it will reject the fact that there is any faculty behind it. Ibn 'Arabi says:

> Meditating on itself, intellect is empty of all knowledge except for the necessary knowledges which it by natural disposition. It pays no when told 'behind you there another faculty which bestows you the opposite of the reasoning faculty bestows'. And the faculty behind the portion of God's elect.

Ibn 'Arabi thus identifies the position of this faculty which has the capacity know God; this position is beyond intellect; for this intellect does not see it. It is if it face before, and a face behind. Ibn 'Arabi defines this faculty as the heart.

If wish represent the intellect diagrammatically, its faculties with the five mechanisms, as well as the heart, it would as follows:



So, it [illegible] as if intellect kept its face towards [illegible] side of the sensible world, and its [illegible] to the side of abstract universes, in such a way that, if it wishes to know the concrete world, [illegible] operates its faculties and mechanisms, which it [illegible] before it; and, if it wishes to know the universes of [illegible] invisible which [illegible] does [illegible] perceive, [illegible] draws from behind it. It draws from the heart, which it does [illegible]

We know that, according to Ibn 'Arabi's texts, the heart [illegible] presented in the form of a dwelling endowed with four pillars; it [illegible] home of the 'four instantaneous ideas' (*khawâtir*). [illegible] pillar [illegible] These 'instantaneous ideas' are: the divine, angelic, psychic and diabolic. And we also know from other texts of Ibn 'Arabi that the [illegible] of this heart, [illegible] well as its matter, is [illegible] mirror, [illegible] facing us. Ibn 'Arabi says: 'Know [illegible] heart [illegible] a polished mirror, facing towards us'[3] (*wajh kulluha*). If we assemble [illegible] which describe the heart, [illegible] form and nature, [illegible] find that for Ibn 'Arabi the [illegible] is [illegible] cubic house made of mirrors, all facing outwards.

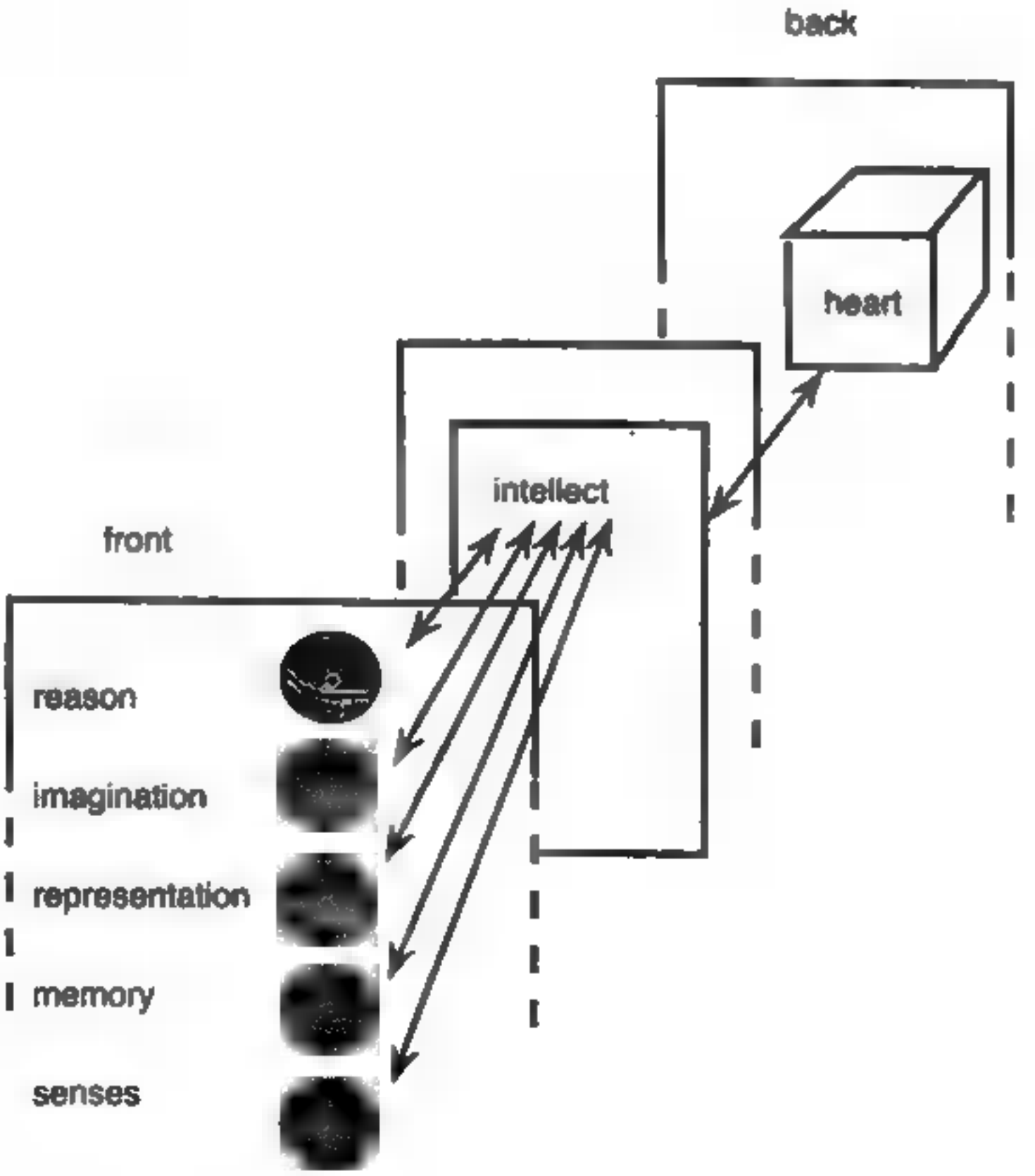
[illegible] impelled Ibn 'Arabi to call [illegible] the heart in [illegible] knowledge of God, [illegible] that the Most High [illegible] inclined the heart towards [illegible] of

knowledge. For it [redacted] a power which does [redacted] become chained, but changes with the divine epiphanies – it is only the knower which merits the name of Knower of God in this created universe. Ibn 'Arabi says:

> The heart is the faculty beyond the arena of the intellect . . . thus the knowledge of God can take place only by the heart, not by the intellect. And the intellect must receive the knowledge from the heart, as it did from reason.

Now, in the light of these texts, we understand the following 'Divine Saying' (*hadîth*): 'Neither earth [redacted] heaven contain Me but the heart of my faithful [redacted] contains me.' We understand this saying as if [redacted] meant 'Neither My earth [redacted] heaven knows Me, but the heart of my faithful [redacted] does know Me.' And largeness of heart is, for Ibn 'Arabi, largeness of knowledge.

Given that the heart is inconstant, it is able to follow the speed of the 'instantaneous ideas', even if they become illuminations, then lightning flashes (*bawâriq*) and sparks, or anything which is [redacted] fixed and suddenly disappears. Let [redacted] try to present [redacted] new schema of the intellect and the heart which is behind it.



Having separated out the place and position of the heart from those of the intellect, [illegible] how [illegible] works, what [illegible] it has, what is its knowledge [illegible] its ignorance. We [illegible] begin by saying that [illegible] heart and its faculties and mechanisms do not function in [illegible] innate manner, [illegible] is the [illegible] in the intellect, and for that reason the awakening of the heart and its birth in the depths are necessary, else we [illegible] not profit from its existence. The heart sees the light of day [illegible] the moment it turns its 'face' [illegible] God. And [illegible] [illegible] to God only when he knows [illegible] [illegible] his intellect there exists [illegible] faculty endowed with active mechanisms, and mechanisms ready [illegible] work by [illegible] of [illegible] particular technique which is able to know God if it [illegible] towards Him. Now, if man does [illegible] know of the existence of his heart, and if the heart does not prove its existence by means of [illegible] action, how can man care for it [illegible] vivify it? So, knowledge of [illegible] existence is [illegible] in order to [illegible] upon it [illegible] [illegible] it, for request [illegible] necessary in all knowledge.

He must, then, know of [illegible] existence of the heart, [illegible] direct it completely to God, [illegible] detach it from the (material) world in order for the worlds of the invisible [illegible] open to him. In this way, he [illegible] receive according to his capacity. Ibn 'Arabi says:

> While there is any greed in the heart, the door of divine royalty (*malakût*) and knowledge will never open. This is on the matter of divine royalty. As [illegible] the door of divine science at the level of visions, it will [illegible] [illegible] while [illegible] only one look [illegible] the universe subsists in the heart.[4]

Here [illegible] questions arise with urgency. How does the knowledge of the heart come about? Is knowledge consubstantial with it, or does it reveal itself to it? Does it apprehend knowledge by itself, or have recourse to other faculties and mechanisms? Ibn 'Arabi's [illegible] do not tackle this subject, [illegible] do they describe the stages of the knowledge of the heart and its modes, and, indeed, [illegible] chapter or section is found which is given [illegible] [illegible] this question. We have, however, tried to assemble some of the fragments dispersed and disseminated in the works of [illegible] 'Arabi in order to build an [illegible] on the matter which would [illegible] proper to him. In order to [illegible] this, [illegible] must examine the heart in [illegible] [illegible] of activity, and then proceed from the object of knowledge of [illegible] world visible [illegible] the intellect, [illegible] that visible to [illegible] heart.

Thus, [illegible] [illegible] study his texts, [illegible] [illegible] that [illegible] 'Arabi dismissed the faculty of [illegible] and the mechanism of reasoning as touching the knowledge of God. We find, however, no [illegible] which dismisses the other faculties (sense, memory, representation, imagination). For [illegible] reason, [illegible] shall [illegible] examine the possible existence of each [illegible] of these faculties, and, where they exist, the ways in which they place themselves [illegible] the service of the heart.

We shall give here only a resumé of the result at which our research arrived.

The Senses: Having operated on the human mechanism, man hears by his limited hearing, and sees by his chained sight. Now he looks and hears through God. This is the station of the proximity of gifts (*qurb al nawâfil*). Ibn 'Arabi says that the sensory faculties are amongst the most perfected. This is why the High God has said, when has qualified the one He loves from among His servants 'I am his hearing by which he listens and his sight by which he looks . . . The sensory faculties are the true vicars of God on earth of our human constitution.'

We note that Ibn 'Arabi begins by summing up the faculties of intellect to put them at the service of the gnostic heart, but using new names and mechanisms he has thus thrown researchers off the track. It is as if the faculty itself had changed, had evolved with man, as if the fact of having served the heart had transported it from one universe to another. Here I tend to think that these new faculties, that is to say, those of the heart, are the same as those of the intellect except that they have been strengthened by light, by practices, (*riyâdat*) and effort (*mujâhadat*), exactly as certain places on earth are illumined by being taken as places of devotion. This is what Ibn 'Arabi calls the virtue of places and the attachment of spiritual will (*himma*) to places; if places are given value by devotion, there is no reason why the degree of human faculties should not be elevated by the *himma* which attaches to them, and should not spiritually outrank the things they dominate. The mechanisms of these faculties will thus conform to the [illegible] evoked and requested. Concerning the grace (*fadl*) of places and their values, Ibn 'Arabi says,

> Just as spiritual places have value ascribed to them so also is value ascribed to physical dwellings. There is a great difference beteen a town populated by covetousness, and a town populated by Evident Verses . . . your existence depends on the degree of the present being.

Now, after Ibn 'Arabi has restored to the heart the sensory faculties, let us examine the role of the faculties, and the way in which the heart has made them operate.

Representation: We notice that the faculty of representation and the imaginative faculty from a role in which they produce phantasmagoria by imitation, are transformed into a role of creative and efficacious activity. Instead of the mechanism of the representative faculty being the description of substances (*ma'âni*) which draw their elements and parts from the sensory world, it is enabled to describe the invisible roles as well as substances which are not drawn from its sensory experience.

Imagination: It is the role for the imagination and the imaginative

faculty. Whereas [illegible] imagination [illegible] imitating [illegible] real, it is now [illegible] imitate [illegible] world apart from [illegible] imagination [illegible] unite with it. It is this imagination which has [illegible] the major part of the interest [illegible] research of Professor Corbin.

Memory: Thus we have followed [illegible] transformation which effected three faculties – from negative mechanism [illegible] inferior rank, to positivity, efficaciousness and higher activity relative to the world of substances. There remains the fourth faculty, [illegible] that of memory and memorization. It [illegible] of the [illegible] ambiguous faculties. But I have said that since [illegible] 'Arabi did [illegible] reject memory in any of [illegible] texts, it [illegible] be that it has passed, like its brother faculties, from inferior to superior rank. [illegible] may be that its mechanisms have been elevated from being [illegible] perishable memorization, incapable of re-living the memory except by images of greater or lesser clarity, to being [illegible] memorization, the power of whose mechanisms [illegible] to keep the images in living form which has no fear of temporal factors. Does there exist for Ibn 'Arabi this kind of living memory?

We refer to texts which discuss the heart, those [illegible] which describe [illegible] in [illegible] of activity, to discover, by comparing these texts, that this memory exists, and that it appears in the texts which cover the question of 'witnessing' (*shâhid*). Here, memory is endowed with [illegible] solid support which is the 'witness'. The texts of Ibn 'Arabi on witnessing are numerous. They all demonstrate the positive role of memory, and its role in the happiness of man after [illegible] end of the time of vision and contemplation. For contemplation annihilates, and in it the contemplator feels no pleasure. This is why contemplation leaves in the heart [illegible] 'witness' by which pleasure arises. This witness is ever present, seeing and [illegible] Ibn 'Arabi says: 'The witness is the image of contemplation which remains within the contemplator. The image of what is seen in the heart is the very essence of the witness. Through it [illegible] who [illegible] finds happiness.' [illegible] again: 'It is [illegible] not to trust a vision [illegible] attested to by one's witness.'

Thus [illegible] witness remains profoundly a witness of that which is [illegible] longer [illegible] or which has been [illegible] and [illegible] then disappeared into [illegible] unseen.

[illegible] this way the faculties of intellect [illegible] also changed, and their mechanisms evolve to be adapted to [illegible] object of knowledge. Every change of object of knowledge necessitates [illegible] transformation of our instruments of knowledge. We have seen how Ibn 'Arabi restored with [illegible] heart all faculties of knowledge, and mobilized them in [illegible] task which [illegible] knowledge, except the faculty of [illegible] which he continued [illegible] refute. [illegible] of this because [illegible] considers [illegible] divine sciences [illegible] the knowledge of God [illegible] [illegible] acquired by [illegible] of human work, [illegible] all reasoning is human work. This is why Ibn 'Arabi has [illegible] transformed

the faculty of reason, and [illegible] not considered it [illegible] of the faculties of the heart, not placing it in higher rank where it could participate in the new knowledge. We think [illegible] Ibn 'Arabi's reason for this refusal [illegible] on something essential – if [illegible] examine in detail the four other faculties (senses, memory, representation [illegible] imagination), we [illegible] that their mechanisms [illegible] limited to partial knowledge with the characteristics of receptivity, and lack invention and productive activity, which [illegible] the sphere of reason.

If [illegible] re-enters this scene, it will surely take control of [illegible] faculties, and bend them to its logical orders [illegible] human reflexive laws, depriving them in consequence of this journey in the universes of substances and [illegible] by imposing on them, [illegible] were, its draconian limits. We shall return to these laws when [illegible] discuss the question of 'realization'.

This is why an alternative faculty to reason was necessary which could mobilize all [illegible] faculties, and draw advantage from their operation. It would belong [illegible] a higher species the laws of which would adjust to the object of knowledge, which is God. What is this faculty which replaces reason in Ibn 'Arabi? From the [illegible] of Ibn 'Arabi we discover that this faculty is 'understanding' It appears as a faculty replacing reason. Ibn 'Arabi says:

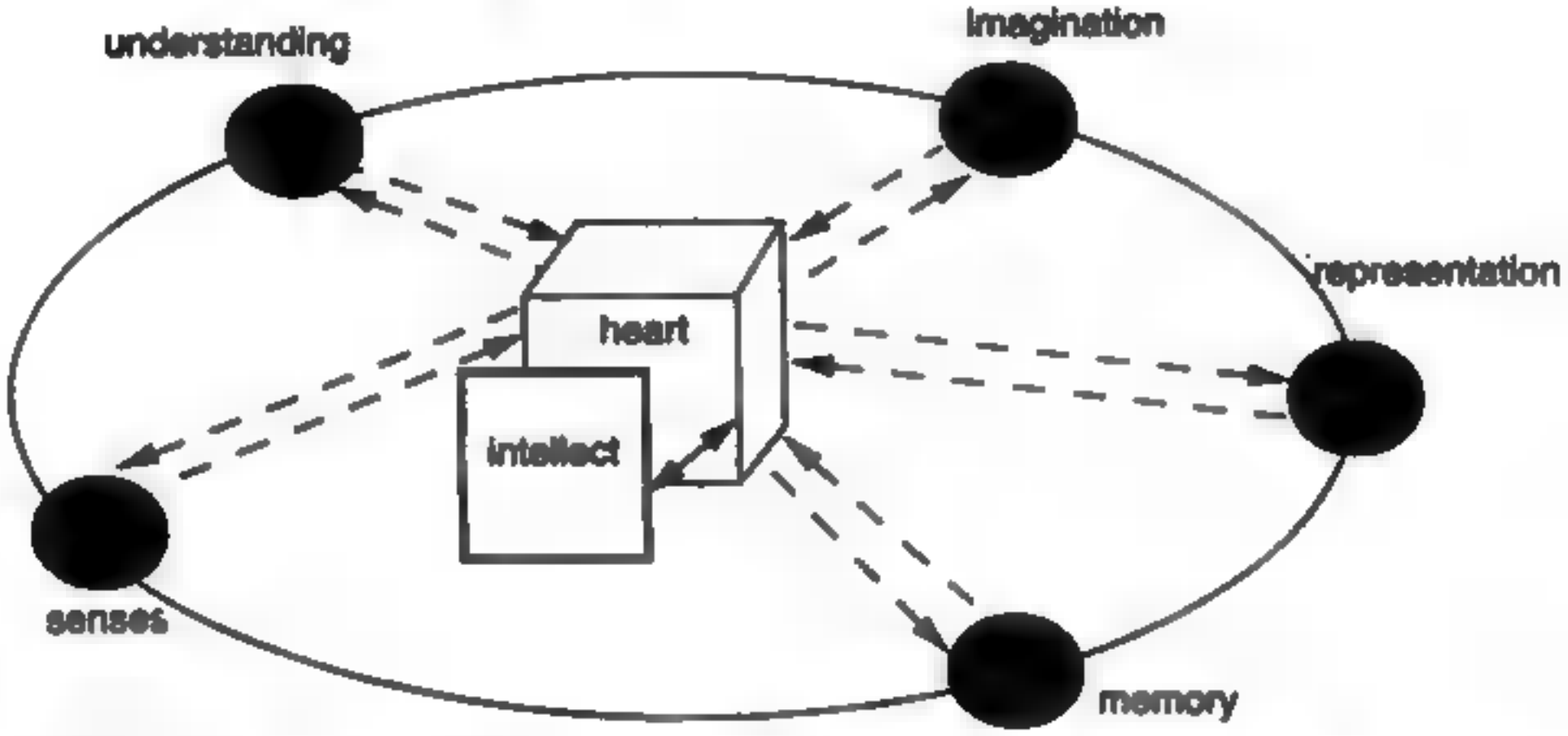
> When spiritual will (*himma*) reaches the Divine Names in its ascension (*ma'ārij*), the Names [illegible] it with knowledge [illegible] light in the measure of its predisposition. To do this there is no need of angel or prophet. For these [illegible] knowledges of legislation but lights and 'understandings'. A saint [illegible] illumination only in understanding.

Ibn 'Arabi places 'understanding' in this rank, allowing it [illegible] use the faculties of knowledge with all their higher mechanisms, for understanding is [illegible] Divine gift empty of any acquired [illegible] It is [illegible] learned by exercise, experience or the other means of acquisition; we either discover it in our hearts, or [illegible] do not. It is [illegible] Divine illumination. The [illegible] of Ibn 'Arabi which relate to 'understanding' are presented in the form of allusions, and he who follows them, sees them. Ibn 'Arabi says, (explaining that 'understanding' is [illegible] revelation, in the same way as Islamic law has been): 'Just as originally revelation of the Book took place in the heart of His prophets, in the [illegible] way revelation of 'understanding' took place [illegible] the hearts of [illegible] of His faithful [illegible] . . .'

Although 'understanding' is revealed to [illegible] a Divine gift, the request which man makes for it could [illegible] a means of obtaining it, but this request is [illegible] accomplished by the classical [illegible] of acquisition, but by turning to God. Ibn 'Arabi says: 'Ask him for understanding, He will respond.' Thus in Ibn 'Arabi, if [illegible] rid the [illegible] of knowledge of [illegible] [illegible] of reason, and purify the dwelling of the heart from [illegible] interference of [illegible]

instantaneous ideas, and, if we devote ourselves, ask, practise detachment, hope, [illegible] the revelation of understanding will take place [illegible] us, and [illegible] shall see that a Divine knowledge infuses into us while [illegible] knowing how it arises. This explains [illegible] fact that what is behind intellect is the place of rejecting.

Now, I [illegible] wish [illegible] return [illegible] the [illegible] of the intellect, [illegible] faculties [illegible] [illegible] image of the heart beyond it, [illegible] [illegible] spatial beyond, the schema would [illegible] as follows.



On this schema we [illegible] all the human faculties free from the chains of [illegible] circling in the sphere of human knowledge.

Knowledge of God thus [illegible] [illegible] human work, [illegible] [illegible] the level of reason and mechanism of reason, but rather [illegible] another level with other capacities and instruments. Like [illegible] human work, however, it requires much effort, care, experience [illegible] practice. Like all knowledge, it has its demands and its [illegible] and it is [illegible] a human luxury.

THE LIMITS OF HUMAN KNOWLEDGE

Up until now we have seen how, for Ibn 'Arabi, man begins to understand by the intellect with its different mechanisms, [illegible] we also know that knowledge obtained by these faculties is still [illegible] enough. Intellect tells [illegible] of the existence of God [illegible] His Unicity, [illegible] rejects all that is [illegible] worthy of Him. God, The Wise, The Healer, He Who gives life and death, He Who gives light – these [illegible] Divine Names, and qualifying substances which the intellect cannot reach by its [illegible] means. Intellect knows God in an abstract, purified manner, and is unable to describe Him; but the Law describes Him, and it is in this way that human knowledge of God [illegible] evolved with the Laws. The image has taken on

features of our human conception, the link between God and consolidated, or, better, it has come to birth with the Laws. For although know, as does philosophy, of existence of a Creator God, and although have invoked Him and our intellects submit to Him, the intellect could Him. From the devotions, philosophy produces only 'meditation'; the philosopher contemplates God, Creator of existence, and that is the that human intellect brings about in the sphere of divinity and in the attempt reach it; what beyond contemplation, derives from popular beliefs, which have nothing to do with philosophy.

When the intellect contemplates and examines the of Divine Law, it that God describes Himself with attributes which the intellect considers unworthy of Him; is in account that God rejoices (*yafrah*) the repentance of His servant, shows himself be discreet (*yastahhî*) *vis-à-vis* old who committed an offence; this man lied, without God refuting him, whereas the intellect exempts God from these attributes. God rejoices! He is discreet!

The intellect is incapacitated. Does it believe in the visible or in the invisible? it believe that there exists, behind, a faculty – the heart – able to know God? And that, to attain to understanding, it has only to draw on it, instead of drawing the reasoning faculty?

Let pursue this journey with the intellect which believes that, behind it, there is this faculty, and then turns to it to ask for understanding once the of reason fallen. We have seen that, for Ibn 'Arabi, the heart recoups all the faculties of the intellect and frees them from subjection to in the hope of reaching knowledge of God. But will the heart know God? And what the limits of its knowing?

We say that the fact of the heart's being the home of instantaneous ideas and inspirations is experience shared by all human beings. Too often we hear someone say 'God inspired me such an action.' That to say that by means of inspiration, instills in him a knowledge in which he differentiates between what is advantageous to him and what is harmful, when the intellect's arguments balance out in him.

Now the heart with its four instantaneous ideas is not a new faculty, just it is not enough turn to the heart to acquire the knowledge of God which seek. For knowledge of God in the heart is to be found within it ready made, that it would be enough for the intellect round in order to receive it. No, like all knowledge, it requires request and an effort.

Once the intellect is convinced of the necessity of drawing its knowledge from the heart, man marks his birth into his long journey. will in dwelling places, stop in areas of countryside, each moment, wait ardently for what is come, but he will never arrive, because knowledge has neither limit end.

Once [redacted] intellect is convinced of the necessity of learning from the heart, [redacted] its journey, it bears [redacted] that time the name 'withdrawn' (*mutajarrid*), [redacted] when [redacted] sword is (with)drawn in an armed encounter. This is the [redacted] for the 'withdrawn' person. He has withdrawn his ardour to face up [redacted] stations [redacted] dwelling places of the Way. Ibn 'Arabi forbids the 'withdrawn' person to give himself up to reasoning; on [redacted] contrary, [redacted] must devote himself, wait, and [redacted] not search, theorize, prospect for knowledge or try to bring it about; [redacted] says:

> What [redacted] speak of in this Way, [redacted] [redacted] [redacted] a gift from [redacted] (*laduniyya*) and [redacted] upon reasoning, research [redacted] prospection, for the mirrors of the burning desires are shining ready for [redacted] appearance of wisdoms and the realization of visions. If the hearts [redacted] fortified by the burning desires, they are purified and elevated. They arrive, reach their goal, and govern . . .

If the intellect is convinced by the necessity of learning from the heart, [redacted] fears the journey, [redacted] lacks strength, or time, [redacted] become only [redacted] beneficiary of the knowledge of those who know, like one benefiting from anyone, any knower.

Having seen with Ibn 'Arabi that it is the heart which is the place and instrument of knowledge, we noted that he made no separation between the heart and the intellect. We [redacted] this opportunity to say that the intellect is the only bridge between the Sufi and the non-Sufi, between the 'knower' and the 'mis-knower'. If the Sufi does [redacted] [redacted] his knowledge in intelligible form, the intellect [redacted] not accept it, and no one will pay attention to what he [redacted] . . . but he will be unable to [redacted] [redacted] knowledge in intelligible form [redacted] [redacted] far [redacted] he [redacted] not brought [redacted] knowledge [redacted] from the heart to the intellect, [redacted] else receives [redacted] understanding developed in the image of reasoned theory, as did Ibn 'Arabi. This is what the scientists of Sufism [redacted] lucidity (*sahw*). The heart is drunkenness (*sukr*), intellect is lucidity. And any knowledge which does not return from drunkenness to lucidity, from the vison of [redacted] heart to the [redacted] of the intellect, I consider to [redacted] [redacted] 'state of knowledge', lived in by the knower, from which he does not depart; consequently, this Sufi is not one of those scientists in his field. For the knowing Sufi (e.g. Junayd, Ghazali and Ibn 'Arabi), although [redacted] has tasted all the [redacted] of knowledge, does [redacted] omit to return [redacted] the sensory in order to give [redacted] line of conduct to disciples. This [redacted] [redacted] [redacted] return to reason, lucidity, [redacted] instruction accepted by the law [redacted] accessible to reason.

As soon as [redacted] [redacted] assured that the heart does not [redacted] the outset contain divine knowledge, it becomes indispensable that there be [redacted] work able to elevate him to the stations of the Way, and prepare him for knowledge; [redacted] [redacted] well, however, [redacted] man's work is limited [redacted] preparation only, for the sciences of the hearts [redacted] the sciences of Gift. The question may

be asked here: 'If a person on the Way (*sâlik*) [redacted] in [redacted] the efforts of the path, and tackles the stations of the heart, is it possible [redacted] he will receive [redacted] knowledge, seeing that knowledge is a gift, and seeing also that the gift is not conditioned by action?' We would answer that Ibn 'Arabi [redacted] his books for his readers to use; in several places, he explains what [redacted] done, so that the [redacted] who studies may follow in his footsteps and benefit from the [redacted] privileges . . . for [redacted] gift will unquestionably [redacted] about; only the privilege of the gift from which [redacted] science benefits in place of another, is [redacted] matter for the Divine Will. Besides, God gives more than the works done by men, and this is why His reward is considered [redacted] gift, for we never do works which equal that which God gives us to know of Himself.

This gift, although it is without relation or measure with human work, is yet within the measure of human capacity; [redacted] of humanity does not enjoy the [redacted] capacity to know – each individual is distinguished by a capacity proper to him, which represents his rank in the general human capacity. Let us now tackle these two capacities: general human capacity and the specific, individual capacity; or, the limits of general human knowledge and the limits of specific, individual knowledge.

The [redacted] of General Human Knowledge

With Ibn 'Arabi, man rediscovers his faith in his humanity, [redacted] the sentiment of his universal human worth. He catches sight of [redacted] identity which temporal complicity had almost wiped out, in the [redacted] of subjectivism and possession (*mulkiyya*), and at the cost of realization. Expressions keep occurring to snatch us from the pit of forgetfulness, to tell [redacted] that man is the soul of the universe, that he is the goal of existence, the [redacted] perfect of the creatures, the pillar which supports the universe; that if he is no longer there, the universe will crumble; that the hereafter is ecstatic [redacted] the arrival of man, that [redacted] is the [redacted] perfect of all those upon whom the glance does, [redacted] does not, fall, aside from God. He is more perfect [redacted] than the angels. Ibn 'Arabi said, 'The most perfect creation to have appeared among the creatures, is man.' He also said, 'We know of God only what our subjectivity gives or delivers to us; and the angels do not possess the completeness of man – he is creature and Truth (*khalq* and *haqq*)'.

Man is then distinguished from [redacted] the [redacted] by his perfection, [redacted] perfection which has taken the form of [redacted] gift vouchsafed to [redacted] This gift is the Divine Names. Only [redacted] bears the Divine Names with faithfulness (*amâna*), and he manifests by these [redacted] in the universe, seeing that in the constitution of every creature there is manifested the

imprint of five, of [redacted] Divine Names, or more, [redacted] less, except perfect [redacted] In [redacted] earth of his constitution is manifested the totality of the Divine Names. The man who gathers together the imprints of [redacted] the Divine Names, it is as if he [redacted] giving [redacted] complete picture of the truths of the Divine Names. That is what Ibn 'Arabi calls by the name Image (*sûra*).[5] Now, [redacted] is not the image of the Divine Essence (*sûrat al-dhât al-ilâhiyya*), because the Essence is, as [redacted] see, the Absolute Invisible. [redacted] man has only benefited from the perfect image of the Divine Truths (*sûrat al-asmâ'*), because of the appearance within him of [redacted] imprints of all the Divine Names. What, however, does Ibn 'Arabi [redacted] by the privilege which man has of the perfect image of [redacted] Divine Truths? We illustrate this by the following example.

If the colour red is found in, for instance, roses, the colour yellow in the wall, the colour white in cloth, the colour green in trees, and if on [redacted] sheet of paper [redacted] draw strokes of all the colours, [redacted] say that the sheet of paper has benefited from the image of all the colours, since all the colours [redacted] brought together on it. The difference in size is there nonetheless between the white of the [redacted] and the white of the stroke [redacted] the picture, between the red of the [redacted] and that of the stroke on the picture, and so on. In this way, man gathers together the imprints of the Divine Names in his soul. For Ibn 'Arabi, man is made according to two images: his body, in the image of the universe, gathers together all the universal truths - gathers together the rivers, mountains and stars,[6] while his soul gathers together the truths of the Divine Names. Man is he who has taken upon himself the burden of faithfulness, a burden refused by the earth and heavens. Ibn 'Arabi says:

> When God created the world, He created it like [redacted] colossal man. He made Adam and his [redacted] [redacted] miniature of this world, and [redacted] is for this [redacted] God gave him all the names, that is to say, all the [redacted] which tend to create the world, namely the Divine Names.

Ibn 'Arabi expresses this idea in the following verse: 'If God gives you His Names, take them [redacted] the faithfulness of [redacted] who understands.'

He among the humans who possesses the two images,[7] is the [redacted] perfect of the creatures. God has honoured him with a reserved gift, which is '*Nâfila*'. Every creature other than man adores God with subjective adoration; only on man God has imposed obligations (*farâ'id*); if [redacted] performs them, and increases their number, he will be a *Nâfila*, the favour of which will bring God to love the man, and become his hearing, his seeing and all his faculties. This is the station of the proximity of the *Nâfila* (*maqâm qurb nawâfil*). Ibn 'Arabi says:

> God says concerning the angels that they praise [redacted] day and night without resting, for the nature of their creation brings this about. This is *structural devotion*, and this devotion diffuses in all that is [redacted] God.

And he says again,

> **. . . because the perfect from among the creatures has a *Nâfila* which exceeds its obligations, and when by this *Nâfila* the servant approaches God, God will love him and, if He loves him, He will be his hearing and his sight. If God is the sight of His servant, the servant will grasp [illegible] in his seeing, for God is his sight. And he can [illegible] God only by God, [illegible] by himself. The angels have no *Nawâfil* which would allow them to be in the proximity of *Nawâfil*. The angels [illegible] obligation, [illegible] obligations have [illegible] their souls; they have no *Nâfila*, [illegible] station to allow them that God be their sight, to grasp God by Himself.**

He said also:

> **He who does not possess *Nâfila*, God will not be his sight; nonetheless our discourse bears [illegible] the reality vouchsafed by unveiling; it does not bear upon that which [illegible] possible for [illegible] intellect.**

Thus, Ibn 'Arabi considers that man [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] adoration, which makes him worthy of Divine Love, for God has not imposed upon him this extra effort, but the effort comes spontaneously from the servant in an [illegible] of approach. God recognizes as *Nâfila* no being other than the Prophet, blessing and peace [illegible] upon him. (Qur'an 17: 79)

Having assured ourselves of the perfection of man, and of his being the perfect knower from among the creatures, and of his created knowledge being the most perfect, [illegible] ask ourselves what [illegible] the limits of that knowledge in Ibn 'Arabi? We shall briefly say that Ibn 'Arabi made the distinction between knowledge of the Divine Essence and that of the Degree of Divinity. Man never knows the Divine Essence because it resists created knowledge. And the knowledge of man is created, as is he. The furthest point of the knowledge which [illegible] can have of God is knowledge of the Degree of Divinity, and the Divine Names. These are, according to Ibn 'Arabi, only [illegible] which God has given to Himself. They play the part of names, and they are only names. If we call a person Zayd, this naming carries no attribution with it, it adds no qualification referring [illegible] the person named Zayd, but bears witness only to the subject. It is the same with the Divine Names, they bear witness only to the subject. No attribute applies [illegible] God. We know no attribute applicable to the Most High. God has attributed these [illegible] in order that He may be addressed by them. If [illegible] seek healing, [illegible] address ourselves [illegible] Him by the Name of 'The Healer'. This Name has been established [illegible] define the divine act to [illegible] creatures. Man evokes and invokes God by the Names.

As to the confusion which occurs in considering the Name as Attribute, this is explained by the fact that the Divine Name indicates the Attribute when it is applied to man; in other words, the Divine Name, if it is attributed to man, gives the [illegible] of an Attribute. This is why God has named Himself by these names which we know as Attributes, so that

may understand Him, direct ourselves towards Him, invoke Him praise Him pleasing to Him by these Names.

The Divine Names names for the Divinity, if they actions, attributes or qualifications. 'Arabi says that God informed of this in the Qur'an; He did not say that He has described Being, but that He has designated it by the Names, 'Wherever you invoke Him, He the most beautiful Divine Names.' (Qur'an) Thus, in Qur'an, God endowed with any attribute. The following example will remove confusion. We say that person is generous only if he quality, when God Himself Generous, it is a name that has applied to Himself, by which He is invoked and evoked. It must be understood that for Ibn 'Arabi it is matter of the attribute of generosity. After that the question arises, whether the attribute is or is the essence of God, is held in Ash'arite and Mu'tazilite theology. Ibn 'Arabi thus able to go beyond the antagonisms of the theologians. All qualifications which apply to God are Names, although they are attributes when applied to us. Ibn 'Arabi said:

> 'Consider the wisdom of the Most High, how He has not endowed Himself with attributes in books, how He has exempted Himself from all qualification.' The Most High said, 'To God revert the most beautiful Names.' this of the Names, and of qualifications attributes. He said, 'Use these Names to invoke Him.' By these Names the praise, but for people it is the qualifier and the Attribute which authorize praise, and not the Name . . . People agreed these Names are attributes qualifiers, seeing they are attributes if they are applied to us, although God to us that they are Names only, and not qualifiers; let the one who hears, that this derives from being involved in the matter, and not from reality . . . To give praise to God by attributes of confirmation used by God as by humans as qualifiers, because, for them, they qualifiers.

Thus is human knowledge determined; even if the heart is its instrument, knowledge remains limited. By the heart, we know of God only the degree of Divinity, which brings together the meanings of the truths of all of the Names. Vision follows vision, do unveilings, epiphanies, Words (*mukhatabat*). All this is a teaching, understanding, knowledge, and there remains of the knowledge of God only the of knowing Him by way of His Names, which only to Him. As the Divine Essence in Ibn 'Arabi, it is seen but not grasped. On the hand man the degree of Divinity, but does grasp its essence. On the other hand, he does not bear witness to the degree of Divinity but to the Essence of Divinity.

To sum up: grasp the degree of Divinity, but do not see it, and we have vision of the Essence, but grasp it only in global manner.

The Limits of Specific, Individual Knowledge

Ibn 'Arabi says:

> **There remains no knowledge, no existent which is not upon the Couch of Mercy. Ask then your cause in every thing; [illegible] you recognize your cause there, you will know your predisposition, [illegible] the degree which you occupy, [illegible] the [illegible] of your degree, and which Divine Name is your God, and what [illegible] your share of sainthood, and the image of your specific determination.[8]**

This [illegible] shows us how the World of knowledge [illegible] Ibn 'Arabi is an organized, structured world, with well determined degrees. Each knower has [illegible] specific determination, [illegible] an image which distinguishes him from others. He also has his reserved portion among the kinds and stations of knowledge and sainthood. This [illegible] from knowledge the burden of that ambiguous, global character which would drive one who is [illegible] stranger [illegible] Sufism to believe that every knower is a knower of all things.

The knower is [illegible] knower of [illegible] precise question. He lives – and this is the most important thing – although his degree is defined, nonetheless, he lives in permanent elevation. What he does [illegible] know today, he will know [illegible] . . . thus we [illegible] qualify him [illegible] knower from the very dawn of his knowing; after that, the degrees remain open before him.

And he is unfurled very far and very high eternally, while progressing to attain the perfect station of knowledge, and the completion of his own. Then, his station is the place in which he has arrived. With the knower, the question of identity [illegible] been transformed from, 'Who am I?' to, 'Where am I?'. In other words if the knower [illegible] to know his identity, and to inform us of it, [illegible] will not answer the question 'Who am I?'; [illegible] will have, in order to make his identity known, to answer the question, 'Where [illegible] I?'

With the knower, identity has passed from determination of the constituents of the human subject to the determination of the degree of the human subject, and when his place is known in the degree of rank order, [illegible] [illegible] know who [illegible] is. Above all, the knower does [illegible] theorize or reason, and does not expound doctrines. Ibn 'Arabi says, 'A thing [illegible] importance only from the point of view of its rank, not from that of its human existence. Now, humanity is [illegible] in every man, and men value themselves by the rank which they occupy, not by their existence.' He says also: 'The converse of any person who has [illegible] does not exceed the degree of his vision and taste, for the Sufis [illegible] sincere people. They relate only vision, not information.'

REALIZATION

At [illegible] sight [illegible] can find [illegible] new theory in the Great Master on [illegible] subject of realization. Each time we study his texts on this point [illegible] [illegible] that they belong to preceding Sufi experience. A simple look [illegible] the Chapter of Lights (*Risâlat al-Anwâr*), the Appearance of [illegible] Substitutes (*Hilyat al-Abdâl*) [illegible] the Illuminations, opens up the way of our realization, the same [illegible] which Ibn 'Arabi's precursors followed; for the [illegible] [illegible] the [illegible] [illegible] the stations resemble each other; the origins [illegible] the [illegible] silence, hunger, solitude, vigil, adoration, piety (*wara'*), asceticism (*zuhd*), utter reliance on God (*tawakkul*) – in this connection Ibn 'Arabi [illegible] brought nothing new to the question of realization. Nonetheless, [illegible] look more deeply [illegible] his writings, [illegible] [illegible] discover the existence of [illegible] theory of realization proper [illegible] him. But now [illegible] us summarise here, in two sections, what in [illegible] book we have studied in [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] manner:

Realization through Truth

First of [illegible] we notice that when Ibn 'Arabi speaks of realization, [illegible] does [illegible] in [illegible] plural. He speaks of the 'Ways of Realization'. [illegible] [illegible] on this subject, 'I have questioned the truths of the [illegible] of the past, those who have shown us the way, and who have expounded to us the ways of realization, when they [illegible] seen in our unveilings.' This use of the plural tells us that, although the foundations are the [illegible] in all the Sufis, objectives differ. This change of objectives [illegible] [illegible] a multiplication of the Ways [illegible] consequently widens the field. There is then, surely, a specific method proper [illegible] Ibn 'Arabi. This method [illegible] not appeared clearly in his texts, and investigating it [illegible] required [illegible] inventive approach.

Every knowledgeable Sufi has [illegible] concept of human perfection, and he attempts [illegible] succeed in realizing his concept according [illegible] the [illegible] foundations and principles which are silence, hunger, asceticism, submission. In other words the foundations and actions [illegible] the same, but always with a different objective.

Let us take the example of Junayd. If we draw from his Epistles [illegible] concept of human perfection, [illegible] find that man has lived special moments of perfection in [illegible] 'Verse of the Pact' (*âyat al-mithâq*) when God asked him: 'Am I not your God?' 'Yes', [illegible] replied.

Perfect human existence for Junayd is his existence for God; once he [illegible] done away with his own existence and forsaken action, God effects in his place what He [illegible] of him. [illegible] [illegible] read the advice of Junayd, his definition of Sufism, and the roads which [illegible] him to perfection, [illegible]

discover that all his human activity [redacted] to dispossess [redacted] of all positivity, until man becomes a pure existence, as it is shown in the 'Verse of the Pact'. Junayd uses the expression 'only the pure souls replied'. This formula shows [redacted] that for him perfection is purity, detachment of soul [redacted] his purification from physical attachments. That is why the path to realization for him takes the form of instructions leading man [redacted] [redacted] of purity.

It [redacted] the [redacted] for Ghazali. If [redacted] seek the notion of [redacted] perfection carefully in his book, *The Vivification of the Religious Sciences*, [redacted] find qualitative perfection. The perfect man is he who renounces all blameworthy qualities, and makes all praiseworthy qualities his [redacted] The path to realization for him would then follow perfection, [redacted] would define itself by the actions of *rejection* [redacted] *possession* of qualities. Thus the methods of realization multiply as a function of the multiplicity of the representation which knowledgeable Sufis have made for themselves of perfection. For realization is not an action sufficient to itself, but relates to its object and [redacted] its objective, which [redacted] human perfection.

As to Ibn 'Arabi, that Sufi of great knowledge, he is in agreement, and [redacted] the same time in disagreement with Junayd and Ghazali. He agrees with Junayd because he considers the question as cyclical, a return to the beginning, with the end in itself a beginning (*annihaya 'ayn al-bidaya*). He parts company with Junayd on the [redacted] of [redacted] unchanging human existence (*'aynûna al-thâbita*). That which [redacted] in the beginning, and which we shall find again, is not only a purity and a pure soul, but an existence which has an identity and [redacted] place. In other words, for Junayd every perfect being resembles another, and is a copy of another; whereas for Ibn 'Arabi, each perfect being is different from all others, for [redacted] immutable truth (*thâbita*) in the Divine Knowledge is singular and different. In realization, [redacted] 'Arabi has maintained individual differences. On this point he agrees with Ghazali, only to part company with him when he considers that perfection is not only [redacted] qualifying form, but that it is an identity and an essence.

From those two comparisons, we conclude that realization in Ibn 'Arabi takes place only by [redacted] journeying towards [redacted] immutable truth (*'aynûna al-thâbita*). This truth is protected from changes of time and place, and guarded in the Hidden which veils and reveals it [redacted] the [redacted] time. Realizing oneself, for [redacted] 'Arabi, [redacted] going [redacted] the direction of the future-to-come, in the direction of the real man which [redacted] are, whom [redacted] feel in the depths of ourselves, and, [redacted] the [redacted] time, [redacted] if [redacted] [redacted] in [redacted] universe apart, [redacted] universe far higher to which we are going. This truth, which is ours, is what Ibn 'Arabi calls immutable truth [redacted] immutable [redacted]

Given that each man has an immutable truth in the Divine Knowledge, which defines itself, and to which he has recourse, and which [redacted] tries to

realize in the earthly reality, it is as if the struggle becomes ■ identity struggle. In the ■■■ of his realization the Sufi is pulled between two identities: his true identity which he seeks (which is his immutable existence, his existence ■ ■■■ in the 'Verse of the Pact', when God testifies to his being), and the other, his present identity, which he bears ■■ which accompanies him in his ■■■ towards his ■■ identity. Thus, the Sufi realizes his ■■ identity by the different exercises which ■■ hunger, vigil, asceticism and submission, for whatever the degree of his fasting and effort he can ■■■ ■■ away from his immutable ■■■ In the end his truth reveals itself ■ him.

In ■ ■■ which gives us a glimpse of an affinity with Junayd, Ibn 'Arabi says:

> To preserve the origin ■ what God requires of ■■ creatures, ■■ for that reason reminds them 'I created you when you were ■ non-existing thing' (Qur'an). That is ■ ■■ that you ■■■ ■■ existent. ■■ ■■ to ■■ ■■■■ 'It ■ ■■■■ for you ■ be, in the ■■■ of your existence, with Me, ■ you ■■■ in ■■ ■■■ of your non-existence, when you accepted my orders ■■■ offered no refusal.'

Realization in Ibn 'Arabi is thus endowed with ■ specific method; for although ■■ has taken ■■ all the modes of experience of his precursors, such as, fasting, vigil, asceticism, submission, for him the path of ■■■■ to realization leads him only towards his immutable existence in the Divine Knowledge.

Realization by Knowledge ■■ Knowledge of ■■ Truth

The object of this work is to show man's capacity to know God, and ■■ have seen the limits of that capacity. It is not enough to observe ■■ to practise effort, hunger, vigil, asceticism and submission to acquire truth, in other words for ■■ to be changed from a 'traveller', putting effort into his task, to ■ 'knower', who realizes himself through truth. This change can take place only if ■■ pass from the logic of piety to the logic of knowledge, that is ■■ say, from the logic of reasoning with the intellect, to the logic of the understanding of the heart.

In a previous essay entitled, 'Ibn 'Arabi and the Birth of ■ New Language', ■■ showed that Ibn 'Arabi is the heir of the Sufi experience and personality, in all modalities. We showed also how he inherited Sufi knowledge, and brought it to its peak. Kharraz said: 'I have known God by His combining of opposites.' Ibn 'Arabi continues ■■ this road, and reaches the furthermost end of it when he says: 'My heart has become the receptacle for ■■ images.' How did the heart of Ibn 'Arabi become ■ receptacle? ■■■ the receptivity of his heart derive from belief and faith, or is it the effect of his visions?

We shall pass directly to results, leaving aside the details which are to be found in the book, in order to [illegible] where and how identifiable transformations have taken place. Chapter 8 of The Illuminations informs [illegible] of this transformation. Ibn 'Arabi says:

> With us, all that intellect considers impossible according to its arguments, we find on this earth as a realized possibility. God is capable of realizing any thing, and [illegible] know that the intellects are deficient, and that God has the power to bring together the contraries, and to realize ubiquity. [illegible] can make the contingent exist by itself in the same way as the knowledge of the senses by the senses. All prophetic tradition, [illegible] [illegible] the Verses which [illegible] have read, [illegible] which intellect [illegible] diverted from [illegible] [illegible] meaning, [illegible] have found according to [illegible] meaning on this earth.

In the [illegible] chapter he says:

> A large number of unthinkable rational matters, considered impossible by rational argument, exist [illegible] this earth. This earth is the horizon of the vision of the knowers, knowledgeable of God. In [illegible] they walk, and amongst His worlds God created another world in our image. If the knower sees it, he [illegible] there his being.

If [illegible] study these two texts, [illegible] well as those sections of Chapter 8 which deal with the earth which was left over from the Adamic clay, in order to have a little more knowledge of what it is, and to know why the criteria change within it, we shall find that it concerns a symbolic earth, which researchers, notably Corbin, have interpreted as being the universe of imagination in Ibn 'Arabi. If [illegible] [illegible] down every word in the writings relating to this earth, [illegible] discover that he used a large number of names for it. Even though he is in the habit of naming the same object by different names, nonetheless these names, as we have shown in the research quoted above, are not synonyms, but each name has a different meaning, and is applied [illegible] the thing named in order to designate an attribute and a particular characteristic. This earth is endowed with several names. That which remained of Adamic clay is called earth. [illegible] bears the [illegible] the 'Earth of Sesame', and thus is also called the 'Earth of Truth'. This last [illegible] puts us on the way to knowing the theory of Ibn 'Arabi.

Let us [illegible] straight to the conclusion. Realization by Divine Knowledge takes place only when the traveller, he who travels towards his immutable truth, wins through to the Earth of Truth; for it is the earth in which the traveller discovers the truth of the world, and [illegible] this truth as it is, as if entering this Earth of Truth is a wise preparation of the traveller. The preparation has a [illegible] logic by which every impossible thing in the past becomes [illegible] possible thing, and [illegible] only a possible, but a reality which is already realized. The fact that this rational impossibility takes place, and that he has seen it, teaches him that God is capable of uniting the contraries, of realizing ubiquity (a body in two different

places the time), etc. On this earth there arise all unthinkable things which the theologians and philosophers deny.

Thus, when, from the Earth of Truth, the knower returns his universe, his will be different. He will endowed with a new logic: for example, will with senses, in the sensory realm, something 'impossible' because he will have already 'seen' it. Experience in the earth of truth has prepared the knower to receive a new knowledge which is determined only by the criteria of truth and reality, and not by those of theoretical intellective logic.

Summing up, shall say in a few words that realization by knowledge in Ibn 'Arabi take place only by to the Earth of Truth. This entry, symbolic, visionary or real, is a re-setting of norms, a preparation of the heart. This preparation frees him from all preconceived logic, and makes him receptive to images.[9]

CONCLUSION

Having examined all these questions, ask, with all frankness, the question, 'Do know God?'

In all frankness, reply: If use the intellect the instrument, then there spring up all the of 'Arabi which show the human being's incapacity to know God. Whatever efforts to know Him, we know only intellectual representation. None adores Him in Truth, and none attains to knowledge of Him. Every one of us venerates only an idol fashioned by his intellect.[10]

On the other hand, if use the heart the instrument, we find that the traveller end of his journey reveals to himself only his truth. No knows God in veridic manner. Each of us knows only according his capacity, his power and the limits of the mirror of his heart. At the end of all his effort, he knows only himself.

Nonetheless, the end of this long paper on knowledge of the Divine, shall say that the Unity of Religions (*wahdat al-adyân*) which seekers have attributed to Ibn 'Arabi is in our view none other than the unity of ignorance (*wahdat al-jahl*) before the Divine Truth. Will Ibn 'Arabi leave man separated from God on the Earth of Ignorance? Certainly not, for when man reaches his truth, remains close to God, for his truth is unchanging in the bosom of Divine Knowledge.

NOTES

1. present work is resumé of research which have undertaken on Ibn 'Arabi which will shortly appear in Arabic. This up its major themes and arguments.

2. Volume I, p. 121.
3. Volume I, chapter III, p. 117.
4. 'The Epistle of Lights' (*Risâlat al-Anwâr*). [redacted] in English as *Journey to* [redacted] *Lord of Power*, tr. [redacted] Terri Harris, East and [redacted] Publications, London, 1981, p. [redacted] (paperback edition).
5. Cf. *Al-Fusûs*.
6. Cf.'The Tree of the World'.
7. Cf. The Lexicon.
8. 'The Epistle of Lights' (*Journey* [redacted] *the Lord of Power*), p. 47.
9. 'Al-mu'jam al-Sufi' (article), Religion (*Dîn*).
10. 'Al-mu'jam al-Sufi': God of the Beliefs, the Fashioned God [redacted] *al-mu'taqad*).

Ibn 'Arabi's Contribution to the Wider Ecumenism

DOM SYLVESTER HOUÉDARD

The title of this paper covers not only the influence actually exercised by the thought of Ibn 'Arabi over the last 750 years, but also the potential contribution that could [redacted] made to the present world of ecumenical investigation. It might also cover the contribution his thought could have made in the past had it been better known: avoiding this grey historical area, [redacted] can start from the fact that it is only now (while theologians are turning to the deeper and wider implications of ecumenical investigation) that Ibn 'Arabi's thought is becoming better known, and is itself posing the question at which I am proposing to look, however provisional and tentative the answers turn out to be.

The 750th anniversary of Ibn 'Arabi is also the twenty-fifth anniversary of Nostra Aetate (28th October 1965) which is the Declaration by the Second Vatican Council on the relation of the Church to all non-Christian religions which [redacted] up all previous theological understanding of the wider ecumenism in [redacted] way that becomes, through the Council, *de fide* for [redacted] Catholics.

This paper should really have been much longer because one would need to study first of all what I mean by wider ecumenism, and what Ibn 'Arabi says about what I mean by wider ecumenism, and then to compare the two, and [redacted] to conclusions. So I will have to take short cuts in the hope that you will excuse them as being minimal indications of [redacted] vast field in which the real theological work will still remain to be done.

Dr Chittick tells us that his recent book[1] deliberately 'avoids making connections between Ibn 'Arabi's ideas and those of other Sufis, other Muslim intellectual authorities, other religious traditions and the contemporary world, since these are fields of investigation that know no limits'. Since the wider ecumenism is [redacted] of these fields, and I [redacted] speaking from another religious tradition and about the contemporary world, about [redacted] present understanding of those other traditions, I feel grateful to Dr Chittick for adding: 'perhaps others will be inspired to follow up the obvious leads'.[2] Let me begin with one or two quotations from the Shaykh:

THE *FUTUHAT* IV

God is with every object of belief: His existence in the conception (*tasawwur*) of him who conceives of Him does not disappear when that person's conception changes into another conception, for God has an existence within this second conception.
In the same way [redacted] will, on the day of resurrection, [redacted] in self-disclosure from form to form. [redacted] the form from which He [redacted] Himself does not disappear from Him since the one who believed that concerning Him will [redacted] it.
Hence He does nothing but remove the veil from the eye of the one who is perceiving the form, so that the person then is 'upon insight'.
If they should blame Him then, for their sake, He transmutes Himself into the [redacted] form which [redacted] their mark.[3]

THE *FUTUHAT* II

God's self-transmutation is the divine self-disclosure in the forms of beliefs.[4]

The mark is the form of their belief concerning him.[5]

Every group believes something about God: if he discloses [redacted] in other [redacted] that something they deny him: the mark is what the [redacted] establishes with God in themselves.[6]

THE *FUSUS* (HUD)

Everyone who is right (however limited) has his reward from the God of Beliefs.[7]

THE *FUSUS* (SHU'AYB)

Every creed is [redacted] particular path:
a. There [redacted] those who (when the covering is drawn back) will be surprised when they find that He is the God, not of logic, but of mercy and forgiveness.
b. There [redacted] those who judge that God is this or that but when the knot of belief is loosened and the heart ceases to be bound, will know by 'direct contemplation' and with sharpened eyesight.[8]

In his *Making of* [redacted] *Image*,[9] Norman Daniel (who decided, unfortunately, not to be concerned with 'such men [redacted] al-Ghazali [redacted] Ibn 'Arabi') [redacted] with some detail into the early, faltering and partial contacts of Latin, often Benedictine, thinkers with Islamic thought. [redacted] takes particular note of the *Cluniac Corpus* of translations commissioned by

St Peter the Venerable (who became a monk in 1109 and died 1156). That *Corpus* includes Robert of Ketton's translation (1143) of the Qur'an, but Dr Daniel fails to notice a remarkable miniature, painted between 1100 and 1125 (and so well before the death of Peter the Venerable) in the tenth-century Abbey of St Martial de Limoges for the Abbey of Souvigny, now in the Bibliothèque des Moulins. It illustrates the initial 'A' of Adam, where it stands at the head of the genealogy of the Patriarchs which opens the Book of Chronicles, not with a picture of Adam, but with a picture of Abraham, showing him as our common Father in Faith, seated and holding *in gremio*, i.e. on his lap (or in his bosom, or in his loins), and between his hands, the three communities, Muslim, Catholic and Jewish, who descend from his line of faith. It indicates in a single image both the unity of the human race and the unity of what is revealed: the unity of God and of his two works, i.e. *creatio* and *redemptio*, the coming-from and the returning-to. It shows that the promises to Abraham are for the sake of all the children of Adam.

This Benedictine icon of the three families locates the norm of ecumenism, in relation to which ecumenism can be considered wider (when it looks beyond the People of the Book) or less wide (when restricted to less than all three families of Abraham).

By its very nature this ecumenical norm could not be established for the Church till the coming of Islam. Though it is fundamental to the thought of Ibn 'Arabi one of his references to it is interesting: 'All the messengers came with speech such as the Qur'an, the Torah, the Gospel, the Psalms and the Scriptures.'[10] Chittick asks what these 'scriptures' are, and suggests[11] that because of Qur'an 87:19 Ibn 'Arabi means 'the scriptures of Abraham', and further suggests this could refer to some particular and possibly lost book of the Pseudepigrapha and Apocrypha. It would surely refer more likely to the third of the three divisions of the Hebrew scriptures 'Torah, Prophets and Scriptures', or their division cited by Jesus[12] 'Torah, Prophets and Psalms.' A reference by Ibn 'Arabi in this context to the Testament of Abraham is far less likely than a reference to all the Jewish-Christian canonical scriptures other than the five books of the Pentateuch, the four Gospels and the 150 psalms.

Within the norm established by the Benedictine icon, each of the three families has two initial lines of vision that need to be related to each other before we can bring the common inheritance from Abraham into focus. The Catholic point of view starts from the vision expressed in the mosaic of AD430, still found in the Dominican basilica of Santa Sabina in Rome, and showing two female figures labelled *ECCLESIA EX CIRCUMCISIONE* and *ECCLESIA EX GENTIBUS*. This is the viewpoint expressed by Pius XI when he said that all Catholics 'spiritually are semites'. From this point of view, ecumenical

understanding by Catholics of their elder brothers (descended like Jesus from Isaac) [redacted] requirement since the time of Jesus, who [redacted] not [redacted] to the lost sheep, [redacted] who was not [redacted] abolish [redacted] one jot [redacted] tittle of [redacted] Law, [redacted] who was [redacted] perfect our understanding of it. From this point of view, [redacted] through circumcision of the heart of mind – that is, the opening of the mind – Catholics see themselves [redacted] co-heirs to the promises made by God [redacted] Abraham in the name of Isaac. But the very Jewish scriptures that we venerate as Catholics also reveal the promise made to Abraham in the name of his eldest son, Ishmael, and reveal that this promise too is infallible. To whom, and how this promise is fulfilled, thus becomes a question that is posed for catholics by revelation itself, [redacted] though Jesus is not descended from [redacted] son of Hagar.

Long before the time of Muhammad, in about AD57, St Paul advanced an interpretation of the figure of Hagar when he wrote to the Galatians (4:24), [redacted] contrasted her with Sarah, making them allegories (and no more) of the slavery and freedom he had experienced in his own spiritual life. In making this point he had no need to refer to any actual descendants of Hagar, or to any actual fulfilment of the promises made to the [redacted] of her [redacted] At the most, if this Pauline [redacted] of [redacted] figure of Hagar is to be [redacted] in dialogue with Islam, it can only refer [redacted] the similar need, felt by the [redacted] of Ishmael, for the promises [redacted] [redacted] fulfilled. The solemn context in which the annunciation to Hagar is made, and her child named by God with [redacted] that means 'May God hear' (or [redacted] 'God has heard') and leading Hagar to [redacted] God 'He Who Sees' (or 'God of Vision', *El Roi*), and leading the place of this encounter with God to be named 'The Well of *Lahai Roi*' (The Well of 'The Living One who [redacted] Me') all preclude the idea of [redacted] mere prophecy of 'descendants too numerous to be counted' (Genesis 16:10), or Hagar's 'son I shall make into a nation' (Genesis 21:13), or 'I will make him into a great nation' (Genesis 21:18). A mystery attaches to the conception of Ishmael [redacted] cannot [redacted] reduced to a parallel with the major and minor blessings that Isaac gives his [redacted] two sons.

Without going into the various options open to a Catholic theologian, either with regard to the Promises made by the Living God who hears and [redacted] and preserves the eldest [redacted] by providing [redacted] for the sake of Abraham's faith, or with regard to the Qur'an, it will [redacted] sufficient for this [redacted] [redacted] indicate that the option taken by Benedictines, in the generation before Ibn 'Arabi, was to associate the Qur'an with the Promises and thus establish [redacted] the norm for ecumenism the three Abrahamic families. As this norm of Three Peoples is itself provided by the Qur'an, it would seem to offer a firm basis from which the Benedictine tradition can explore, as an integral area of monastic theology, the domestic economy by which God regulates His household in the [redacted]

extended [redacted] and [redacted] every level, beginning with the entire human [redacted] contemplated in its descent both from Noah [redacted] from Adam. This is the [redacted] which in 1952 I [redacted] 'the wider ecumenism' so [redacted] to indicate something quite precise, [redacted] quite unlike the [redacted] of the term made by *The Times*[13] in reference to [redacted] letter from Viscountess Stansgate, recommending simultaneous membership of all different religions.

It may [redacted] objected that the word and concept of 'ecumenism' should be confined to catholic usage, as it refers to the wholeness or catholicity of the civilized world within the confines of the Roman Empire, [redacted] that ecumenical councils are those [redacted] which the whole Church, Greek and Latin, is present.

In its wider sense, however, ecumenism is to do with the divine economy; how God regulates His house in which He dwells, which is the entire cosmos, and His household which consists of the entire human race, since [redacted] men [redacted] made according to 'His image' ('upon His form'). It is in this sense that Ibn 'Arabi refers in the *Futûhât* to God [redacted] 'taking [redacted] of the needs of misbelievers' and 'giving them to drink', since they worship only God, though applying the name 'God' to those idols and statues they suppose are the *loci* of His manifestation, since God alone is what is denoted by those *loci*. Taking care of them, [redacted] punishes them if they do not honour the 'divine side' in this inanimate form.[14]

His phrase 'giving them to drink' alerts us [redacted] another passage about the drinking places:

> The drinking places have become variegated and the religions diverse. The levels have been distinguished, the divine names and the engendered effects have become manifest and the gods have become many in the cosmos. People worship angels, stars, nature, the elements, animals, plants, minerals, human beings and the jinn. So much [redacted] that when the One presented them with His Oneness, they said, 'Has [redacted] [redacted] the gods [redacted] God? This is marvellous' (Qur'an 23:117).
>
> . . . there is no effect in [redacted] [redacted] which is not supported by a divine reality, whence do the gods become many? They become many from the divine realities [redacted] this derives from the names. God [redacted] expansive with the names: Worship Allah (Qur'an 4:36); Fear [redacted] your Lord (Qur'an 65:1); Prostrate [redacted] the All-merciful (Qur'an 25:6); Call upon [redacted] [redacted] call [redacted] the All-merciful: whichever you call upon, to [redacted] belong the Most Beautiful Names (Qur'an 17:110).
>
> Had He said, 'call upon [redacted] or call upon the All-merciful: whichever you [redacted] upon, [redacted] Entity is One, and these two [redacted] belong [redacted] it,' the difficulty would have [redacted] removed, and the text would [redacted] be ambiguous for the people. Why [redacted] God leave this difficulty? He left it [redacted] a mercy for those who associate others with Him, for [redacted] people of rational consideration, [redacted] for [redacted] who associate others with [redacted] on the [redacted] of obfuscation.[15]

In Catholic theology from [redacted] least [redacted] Basil onwards, [redacted] 'Names' are the Divine and Uncreated Energies, and so [redacted] this point Ibn 'Arabi can [redacted] tribute even [redacted] the dialogue between Latin [redacted] Greek theologies with respect to the Filioque.

In the commentary on the word *samad* in the [redacted] of Unity[16] 'He is God, One' refers to the unity of the One (*ahadiyyat al-ahad*); *samad* refers to the fact that all manyness returns to the Names and [redacted] refuge in them.

> In respect of His self God possesses the unity of the One, but in respect of His [redacted] He possesses the unity of the many . . . This is the cause which brings about [redacted] Self-Disclosure within the diverse forms, and his Self-Transmutation within them: [redacted] diversity of beliefs in the cosmos demands this manyness. The root of the diversity of beliefs in the cosmos is this manyness in the one entity. [redacted] explains why [redacted] people [redacted] [redacted] resurrection deny Him when He manifests Himself and says; 'I [redacted] your Lord.' Were He to disclose Himself to them in the form in which [redacted] [redacted] the Covenant with them, no one would deny Him. After they deny Him, He [redacted] [redacted] into the form in which [redacted] [redacted] [redacted] the [redacted] with them.
>
> Since (a) God is [redacted] root of every diversity (*khilaf*) in beliefs within the cosmos, and since (b) God has brought about the existence of everything in the cosmos in a constitution not possessed by anything else, it follows that everyone will end up with mercy, for it is He who created them and brought them into existence within the cloud which is the breath of the All-Merciful.[17]

Some final quotations from the Shaykh:

> . . . God's Self-Transmutation is the divine self-disclosure in the forms of beliefs.[18]

> The [redacted] of the resurrection: Having denied Him He asks if there is a sign (*aya*) by which they would recognize God: they acknowledge Him as their Lord. This sign is also [redacted] the mark (*'alama*) which is the form of their belief concerning Him.[19]

> Every [redacted] [redacted] believed something about Him . . . this is the mark the group has [redacted] with God in themselves . . . [e.g. the Ash'arites and the non-Ash'arites].[20]

> Though God transcends the station of change [redacted] alteration in His essence the station bestows its [redacted] [redacted] the self-disclosures in the divine *loci* of manifestation in the measure of the [redacted] which [redacted] occasioned within the creatures instant by instant.[21]

He cites also Bukhari, who has [redacted] chapter 'On what has [redacted] regarding the fact that the religion of the prophets is one', and this 'one religion' is nothing but *tawhid*, performing [redacted] religion and worship. On this the prophets have all [redacted] together.

It is in, then, a very precise sense of the term 'wider ecumenism' as wider than the Three Peoples, and as seen to go 'wider' from the basis of the Three Peoples, that I use the term in this paper. As Daniel shows,[22] it became possible to speak in the Latin West of there being three revealed religions ('laws') in the world. Peter the Venerable went to great trouble to prove that only two religions had been revealed before the time of Muhammad.

It may be important for some people to distinguish between ecumenism and dialogue. Inter-faith dialogue involves the active participation of at least two parties, i.e. two faiths; ecumenism involves theological reflection in our concrete world-society of many beliefs. As Charles Amjad-Ali points out,[23] 'dialogue' needs to be taken as going through the *logoi*, the principles on which a theology depends for inner coherence.

The basic principle involved in ecumenical reflection is the Divine Mercy, the universal salvific will of God, and has nothing to do with any bargaining between parties to diminish or eliminate credal differences between religious traditions.

Ecumenism does not propose alterations in Torah, Gospel or Qur'an; it does not propose any moratorium on the proclamation of what is revealed. On the contrary, encounter with other traditions imposes, first of all, the obligation to understand what precisely is being encountered (and thus listening to what the other proclaims), and, secondly, it demands an understanding of that in the light of those principles by which one's own theological tradition becomes coherent. This defines the context when dialogue with other religions becomes ecumenical. It becomes the occasion to reflect on one's own tradition in the light of other traditions. Both in church and in mosque, the Gospel and Qur'an are proclaimed in the first place to one's own community, and the purpose of proclamation, to oneself or to other, is always *conversio*: that oneself or the other should turn to God, and turning will always imply the elimination of error, ignorance and misunderstanding, both about one's own tradition and about that of others.

The principles that unify the theology of Ibn 'Arabi are necessarily the principles that determine his approach to all non-Abrahamic religions. In the *Fusûs*, the question of polytheism is broached on three occasions: in discussing Noah, Luqman and Aaron, but here it is the chapter on Noah which is particularly revealing.

In Judaism, a basic principle is laid down both in Tosefta Sanhedrin 13:2 and in the fourth-century Mishnat Rabbi Eliezer: 'The pious of the Nations of the World who observe the seven Noachic precepts will inherit the World to Come as Israel.'[24]

In the same way in Catholic theology, Noah's Ark, borne up by waters in which Giants of Arrogance drown, is a type of the Church

(militant ▬ earth, suffering in purgatory, ▬ triumphant in heaven) outside of which *nullus omnino*[25] (no one at all) is saved. The ▬ that bear up the ark are, in the first Letter of St Peter, ■ type of baptism,[26] of ▬ emerging from ▬ to ▬ which ■ ■ participating in the resurrection, in the ▬ creation, through the freedom of ▬ ceaseless epectasy, which is ▬ advance to God through His ceaseless advance to us, ▬ in His continuous creative ▬ by which He is giving Himself ▬ ▬ ▬ eternal possibilities chosen by Him ▬ receive that gift, and in the universal salvific will, which ■ ▬ self-gift of God offered to us ▬ creatures with the spiritual faculty of *tawhid* in willingly accepting ▬ gift ▬ given, or rejecting it in *shirk*.

This is an 'e-mergence' from disobedience, since the flood, as Peter says, ▬ ▬ by God over ■ disobedient world.'[27] The ▬ from which ▬ eight in the ark were saved typify, ▬ 'a putting off of the filth of flesh' i.e. ▬ a merely penile circumcision, but 'the pledge or promise to God of maintaining that right internal attitude to Him which unites us ▬ the resurrection.'[28] That is, by the cordial circumcision, ▬ opening toward God, of the heart of mind, in ■ reversal of disobedience. In other words, it is that submission to Him which is called Islam.

As the author of the Letter to Jewish Christians puts it (*Hebrews*, 11.7), the reward for Noah's faith, by which the world is convicted, ▬ holiness. Jesus himself makes ▬ reference ▬ ▬ ancestor Noah[29] that 'as in those days up to the Flood, so in the days of the Son of Man,' i.e. ▬ to the destruction of AD70, from which only a few escaped, such ▬ Rabbi Jochanan ben Zakkai who fled to Jabneh, and the Christians who fled to Pella.

Dr Netton's ▬ book, *Allah Transcendent*[30], is ■ study of what ▬ calls: 'the transformation of the Quranic Creator Paradigm into the Paradigm of Islamic Transcendence;'[31] ■ study of ▬ growing ▬ on transcendence that created ■ 'gulf of alienation'[32] between the two paradigms, ■ gulf filled with, and created by what ▬ amusingly calls[33] 'baroque' schemes of emanation. Having traced this alienation from al-Kindi (d.AD866) to al-Hamidi (d.AD1162), he concludes with a brief study of Ibn 'Arabi, Aquinas and Eckhart who, ▬ three, release the stress on transcendence through the Abrahamic paradox of *huwa* ▬ *huwa*, the paradox of transcendence and immanence in coalescence, through the presence of the transcendent in everything that is, in time, by way of becoming *in fluxu* ▬ *in fieri*, which allows increase in knowledge, in obedience and in submission.

If ▬ look for a single insight that clarifies the metaphysics, the theology and the spirituality of Ibn 'Arabi, Aquinas and Eckhart, ▮ suggest that ▬ find it most easily in their concept of the Possibilities, of the *mumkinât*, which underlies the whole of Ibn 'Arabi's thought, and particularly when speaking about the *barzakh* of *barzakh-s*, about ▬

Divine [redacted] and about *takhalluq*, assuming the names (assuming the 'traits'), [redacted] about the diversity of beliefs and about the roots of every diversity of manyness: God has 300 (names) and whoever 'assumes one of them . . . will enter the garden.'[34]

This can serve to remind us of the Noachians who enter the rabbinic [redacted] Eden 'as Israelites', because in the *Fusûs* it is the chapter [redacted] Noah that Ibn 'Arabi devotes to the absolute need to conjoin the two. Before he enters the ark, Noah exhorts 'his' people to abandon similarity and immanence in favour of transcendence [redacted] incomparability (and, insofar [redacted] [redacted] whole human race is descended from the eight in the ark, we too are 'his' people). We could [redacted] take this figure of Noah, neither in the water nor yet in the ark, as an appeal to the Paradigm of Islamic Transcendence. Noah's entry into the ark borne up by the [redacted] is, then, an akbarian return to the safety of [redacted] Quranic Paradigm of Creation, and its affirmation of the coalescence. Though Ibn 'Arabi does not draw our attention to it, there is [redacted] an excellent example of [redacted] *barzakh* in the figure of [redacted] wood borne up by the waters [redacted] which [redacted] floats, and without which it would not be a place of safety.

The universal salvific [redacted] of God, ('God desires [redacted] [redacted] to be saved' [redacted] Paul says to Timothy[35]) means that all humans [redacted] necessarily offered the gift of faith, the acceptance of which constitutes the baptism of desire or emergence from the waters in which none but the giants of arrogance drown. Since [redacted] are offered this gift [redacted] [redacted] luminous, innermost heart of mind, which is the *nunc fluens* out of which [redacted] [redacted] never step, and [redacted] the *barzakh* between future and present where [redacted] [redacted] in immediate [redacted] with the [redacted] *stans* of God in our openness to His self-gift, this gift is necessarily offered to [redacted] in the context of our concrete, historical community life. It is offered to each in the [redacted] of his religious community, and its acceptance, in however slight a degree, implicit in however small [redacted] act of selflessness, irrespective of any degree of invincible ignorance, constitutes a true entry into the ark. All who accept this baptism *in voto* by emerging *in voto* from the waters are members of the Church *in voto* (that is, in the desire for God). This membership of the Church through desire for God [redacted] [redacted] been defined as a membership [redacted] *re*. If Jewish theology sees the Noachians entering the Garden as Israel, Catholic theologians see them entering [redacted] Christians, as the Church, and yet [redacted] adequate designation of these Noachians in Catholic terminology is still elusive: that suggested by Karl Rahner is either 'implicit Catholics' [redacted] 'anonymous Christians'.

A special revelation might [redacted] needed for those who don't experience human community, those who [redacted] 'brought up by wolves', who [redacted] [redacted] another human, but it is as repugnant to Ibn 'Arabi [redacted] it is to Catholic theologians [redacted] think that salvation depends on nothing but [redacted] of religion that [redacted] purely interior.

> The deviated esotericists (*al-bāṭiniyya*) fail to 'see with two eyes' and claim only the inward is true; they claim there is no need to distinguish good and evil; they claim the revealed law is not universally applicable.[36]

> Everyone is a possessor of two eyes (*dhu'l-'aynayn*) [illegible] everyone [illegible] some extent [illegible] with [illegible] even if ignorant of God.[37]

> Have We [illegible]t appointed him two eyes . . . and guided him on the two highways?[38]

In every religion that [illegible] know, the power of God's self-gift is at work impelling man to God, and plays the decisive part in determining [illegible] forms in which these religions are objectively expressed, however primitive, grotesque or corrupt those forms might be. Ibn 'Arabi certainly holds that all who arrive at the Beatific Vision do so through *tawhīd*, and so through Islam, and so [illegible] Muslims, and so [illegible] those who on earth, might be referred to, adapting Rahner's terms, as implicit or anonymous Muslims.

When St Thomas actually considers humans brought up by wolves,[39] [illegible] says: 'It pertains to divine providence [illegible] furnish everyone with what is necessary for salvation provided that on his part there is no hindrance,' and this God provides 'through internal inspiration' and what [illegible] provides is 'that which has to be believed.'

He says in the *Summa*: 'When [illegible] reach the [illegible] of reason, first we [illegible] deliberate about ourself, and then, if [illegible] direct ourself [illegible] [illegible] end, [illegible] receive grace,'[40] that is, the self-gift of God.

One distinction that will deserve future reflection is this: the Catholic theology of God's Universal Salvific Will establishes the possibility of universal salvation on the certainty that everyone, everywhere, at all times, in all religions is offered the self-gift of God, which [illegible] be infallibly effective providing it [illegible] not rejected. When I [illegible] an undergraduate, Fr Gervase Mathew, the Dominican, used to say the Church has always taught that hell exists, but [illegible] never taught that anyone will [illegible] fact end up there.

In Ibn 'Arabi, however, the mercy of God by which [illegible] are created and saved, being infinite, the possibility of no [illegible] ending up in hell is [illegible] by [illegible] to become the actuality of [illegible] one [illegible] [illegible] remaining [illegible] the fire.

If this is so, what for the Catholic theologian, and (I suspect) for [illegible] Muslim theologians, is a possibility, would [illegible] for Ibn 'Arabi [illegible] taught as a theological certainty. That he does teach this [illegible] to [illegible] doubtful. Chittick [illegible] that [illegible] teaches that *tawhīd* [illegible] [illegible] without faith,[41] and cites the important [illegible] in the *Futūḥāt*, I, 314:9, which [illegible] cites the *ḥadīth*: 'He who dies knowing there is "no God but God" will enter the Garden.' But this is the problem that Catholic theologians used to discuss [illegible] the problem of the natural, i.e. philosophical

knowledge of God which has only rational human certitude, and not the certitude of faith. Since Vatican II one is [redacted] prepared to say that implicit in every philosophical search for natural, conceivable truth is [redacted] preconceptual willingness to submit [redacted] truth, even though [redacted] yet conceived, [redacted] though it should be conceived [redacted] Inconceivable.

The development of [redacted] Catholic theology of 'salvific optimism' can be traced from St Paul, through the patristic teaching [redacted] the presence of God through self-gift in every eternal possibility chosen by God to be actualized in time by His self-gift.

St Thomas may [redacted] to modify Ibn 'Arabi in two points: first, because He is His own knowledge of Himself, God knows, [redacted] so much each 'possibility', [redacted] the *truth* of each possibility, namely that it is [redacted] true possibility. Secondly, and which may be [redacted] more important difference, where Ibn 'Arabi is thought by some to have implied that [redacted] true possibilities are actualized in time (not necessarily in this universe which is the only one [redacted] can actually know), St Thomas distinguishes between those possibilities known by God with the *knowledge of vision*, and these are the possibilities that [redacted] actualized because God has chosen and loved them from all eternity, and preferred them to those true possibilities known by God with the *knowledge of simple understanding*, which [redacted] chosen by God but chosen to be [redacted] actualized in time. If God 'loved [redacted] before [redacted] love Him', then [redacted] love for Him becomes [redacted] participation in Divine Love.

If by this self-gift of God or 'first grace' we come to be [redacted] becomings in time, then the 'second grace', by which [redacted] [redacted] saved and come [redacted] the beatific vision, is also the self-gift of God to that possibility of receiving it, but only to those possibilities which claim [redacted] actuality as their [redacted] other than that which is given, since any such other actuality would be [redacted] second beside God. *Tawhîd* and *shirk* necessarily exclude each other.

Only humans on earth have the spiritual faculty of being [redacted] of their [redacted] nothingness, their own lack of actuality other than that which is the self-gift of God: but, [redacted] becoming [redacted] of this, they have the possibility of either welcoming it or resenting it. This [redacted] being the [redacted] luminosity of the heart of mind, as the [redacted] possibility of knowing and loving can never itself be an object of actual knowing: it is the preconceptual condition for [redacted] conceptualization.

Since God alone is, and [redacted] merely become, there [redacted] be no [redacted] other than God Himself to induce Him to say the creative word '*Be*, [redacted] God alone is the [redacted] for the [redacted] existing, and so the salvific will of God is necessarily universal. It follows from this that every man, everywhere, must have some positive [redacted] of salvation available, [redacted] true possibility of possessing that salvation which is God Himself, a [redacted] path [redacted] way which can be followed by even 'deviated esotericists' in the [redacted] crete community and culture, which is the context of human life.[42]

Salvation is God's will [illegible] bestow Himself [illegible] every [illegible] endowed with spiritual faculties,[43] and His self-gift is necessarily effective [illegible] frustrated by Giants of Arrogance asserting [illegible] self [illegible] [illegible] second beside God, and introducing into the [illegible] something God [illegible] [illegible] created.

Ibn 'Arabi and [illegible] Thomas are fully parallel in their development of Philo's insight that, though we know *that* God is, [illegible] do [illegible] know *what* God [illegible] (however well [illegible] know what God is not).

When [illegible] conceive of the Inconceivable, [illegible] distinguish [illegible] formal and material objects of [illegible] knowledge [illegible] love. Yet [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] objects, or [illegible] would [illegible] di-theists. God is both transcendent (or incomparable) [illegible] immanent (or similar). All revelation [illegible] unveiling [illegible] municates this formal object in words descriptive of God as [illegible] material object.[44]

This inseparability of [illegible] two is the coalescence ('conjunction') [illegible] which the chapter on Noah is devoted, and is the [illegible] of what Ibn 'Arabi says about the sign (*âya*) or mark (*'alama*) in his comments [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] about the resurrection.

As the whole cosmos is a revelation of God to itself, and in [illegible] special way [illegible] the human parts of itself, it too communicates the formal through the material. Since the human mind is itself the [illegible] part of the [illegible] to its [illegible] closest inspection, [illegible] come to understand the 'more than human saying' of Antony[45]: 'unless you know yourself you cannot know God'. A saying that [illegible] lie behind the [illegible] cited by Ibn 'Arabi in the chapter on Noah, and in a form that Dr Austin has not traced further back, 'Who knows himself knows his Lord.'[46]

The revelation or inspiration made to all men, the interior inspiration that offers the formal object through the material, is necessarily [illegible] the level of what is most interior [illegible] the human person, the heart of mind, [illegible] *apex mentis*. The heart of mind is the preconceptual level where mind is the luminous possibility of knowing and loving, where it is the mere possibility of [illegible] gap between subject and object, and so where it is, in fact, bereft of any such [illegible] or space, and so where it is [illegible] any instant wholly 'with' itself and dimensionless, like the centre of a circle. As with space, so with time. The heart of mind is also where future touches past, so that again no smallest [illegible] can enter between the two, and we, at any dimensionless instant of our life, are necessarily aware that [illegible] [illegible] say 'I am' but only 'I become'. It is where we [illegible] aware, as Eckhart remarks, that all things can say 'I', but nothing other than God can say 'am'. Here, the instant that future becomes present is the instant that present becomes past, so that extinction and inception are simultaneous in the continuousness of creation. This continuousness of the arrival of 'am-ness' and its extinction [illegible] the very instant into 'was-ness' constitutes the ceaseless epectasy of mind, and the unceasingness of human self-transcendence. At this innermost dimensionless point or *barzakh*, where

we, [illegible] possibilities chosen in eternity by God, receive the divine self-gift of being *in fluxu et in fieri*, mind by the creative *kun* is always and necessarily turned to God. Aware of this, [illegible] see all things in the cosmos [illegible] mirrors of our own createdness [illegible] nothingness. Insofar [illegible] anything is, it is only by way of becoming, and not by way of being.

Nothing exists in time [illegible] through this unceasingly continuous arrival and extinction of being [illegible] becoming: humans alone on earth can either [illegible] accept this, but only through the self-gift of God (through grace) can either the freedom to accept or refuse, or the acceptance or refusal itself, exist, and it [illegible] here that [illegible] touch the transcendental element of all revelation, including revelation through words. [illegible] is this element which offers all [illegible] possibility of that salvific faith by which, in Catholic theology, all humans can receive baptism *in voto*, [illegible] the ark of the church *in voto*, [illegible] become members of the mystical body *in voto*, if [illegible] *in re*.

THEOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT

Catholic theological investigation of the wider ecumenism explored many [illegible] turnings after St Thomas in the necessary process of eliminating confusion, and reaching a coherent, logical and orthodox con- [illegible] A notable landmark in this development of dogma was reached when Pius IX (Singulari Quidam, 1854) declared [illegible] to be *de fide* that all not entering the ark perish in the Flood, but among those who [illegible] perish are not to [illegible] numbered any who live in 'invincible ignorance'. From then on – including the Holy Office declaration of [illegible] August 1949 by which the *votum implicitum ecclesiae* is called sufficient for the salvation of all who live, not only in 'invincible ignorance', but in 'invincible error' – theological reflection on the wider ecumenism may be seen [illegible] more positive preparation for Vatican II, the twenty-fifth anniversary of which coincided with the 750th anniversary of the Shaykh al-Akbar.

After the Council, the work of two theologians in particular should claim the attention of anyone interested in the Catholic presentation of one of the hallmarks of Ibn 'Arabi's thought: Karl Rahner (especially his *Theological Investigations*, Vols 2, 5, 7, 9, 10, 11, 14) and Francis Cardinal Arinze.

Rahner [illegible] very close to [illegible] 'Arabi in the following:

> Salvation is God's [illegible] bestow Himself on every creature endowed with spiritual faculties.
>
> This gift takes effect from [illegible] spiritual centre, [illegible] boundaries to our transcendentality – makes it possible for us to act for our own salvation since it imparts to each human his own 'inner tendency' to God in epectasy.

> We can become aware of this but can never objectify it – yet this innermost spiritual mode of transcendentality can be activated only in the concrete realities of community conditioned by space and time, [illegible] exist in detachment [illegible] our historical life. Saving history is co-existent with the spiritual dimension of human history – revelation history takes place always and everywhere because of God's transcendental self-bestowal, and all inner reflection on this is [illegible] guided by God in our own heart. Every individual must have some positive [illegible] of salvation [illegible] him giving [illegible] the possibility of possessing salvation, and giving it [illegible] of [illegible] institutional life of his community.

> Nothing but the wilful sinfulness of an individual can turn the path of his inherited religion into a 'false way': everyone who genuinely embarks on his own path must arrive – only personal guilt can frustrate this optimism of Universal Salvation.

Rahner comes even closer to Ibn 'Arabi when considering this [illegible] level of *qalb* (*apex mentis*):

> Of this continuous offering of Himself by God [illegible] are aware in [illegible] way that cannot impinge on ordinary conscience since it cannot *ipso facto* be known in itself as an object of knowledge – yet it [illegible] this which is mediated throughout the entire stretch of human history . . . This (pre-conceptual) awareness is revelation and it is always accepted 'in faith' wherever man accepts himself in freedom [illegible] he is, in all [illegible] unrecognizable implications of the dynamism underlying the [illegible] of [illegible] spirit . . . This faith is real [illegible] supernatural whether [illegible] it is objectified in words . . . Because of the Universal Salvific Will there is [illegible] primordial revelation [illegible] preconceptual level in the [illegible] of [illegible] spiritual faculties – but of this self-communication of God the objectifications [illegible] historical [illegible] conceptual levels are many [illegible] varied.[47]

To conclude, from the *Futûhât*[48]:

> (Messengers come on behalf of the Real [illegible] all groups and peoples) and describe the Real so they might come [illegible] know Him through [illegible] knowledge they had not previously had . . .
>
> (Among all the reactions [illegible] the revelation of Similarity, there [illegible] that which characterises the weakest group). They have only [illegible] half of [illegible] since they accept the description of similarity but lack the rational understanding of the attributes of incomparability derived from 'Nothing is [illegible] him'(Qur'an 42:11).
>
> Those who [illegible] surely saved [illegible] the [illegible] who have reached the truth are those who have faith in that which comes from God as God means it [illegible] knows it, while negating similarity through 'Nothing is like him.'
>
> These are the tongues of the revealed religions in the cosmos bringing for the Real Himself such attributes as form, eye . . . patience . . . This is so that we might have faith in all of it, i.e. so that we might know that the divine self-disclosure (within the entities of the possible things) bestows [illegible] descriptions – for [illegible] is no witnesser [illegible] nothing [illegible] except God.

> The tongues of [redacted] religions [redacted] [redacted] proofs of the self-disclosures - [redacted] self-disclosures [redacted] the proofs of the divine [redacted]

As Dr Chittick says: 'Those who [redacted] "surely saved" affirm God's similarity and negate it [redacted] the [redacted] time through affirming [redacted] incomparability . . . the divine root of the necessity for man to affirm both' is that [redacted] [redacted] 'created upon the form of the all-comprehensive [redacted] (*al-ism al-jâmi'*), Allâh', which includes [redacted] the names.[29]

NOTES

1. W.C. Chittick, *The Sufi Path of Knowledge*, State University of New York Press, Albany, 1989, p. xx.
2. Ibid.
3. Chittick, *Sufi Path*, p. 337; *Futûhât*, IV, 142:30.
4. Chittick, *Sufi Path*, p. 336; *Futûhât*, II, 311:25.
5. Chittick, *Sufi Path*, p. 336; *Futûhât*, I, 266:18.
6. Chittick, *Sufi Path*, p. 336; *Futûhât*, I, 266:15.
7. *Bezels of Wisdom*, trans. R.W.J. Austin, New York, 1980, Ch. [redacted] Word of Hud, p. 137.
8. Ibid., Ch. [redacted] Word of Shu'ayb, p. 152.
9. Norman Daniel, *Making of* [redacted] *Image*, Edinburgh University Press, 1960.
10. *Futûhât*, II, 366:27.
11. Chittick, *Sufi Path*, pp. 213, 403 n.2.
12. Luke 24:44.
13. *The Times*, [redacted] Feb. 1990.
14. Chittick, *Sufi Path*, p. 381; *Futûhât*, I, 661:10.
15. Chittick, *Sufi Path*, p. 363; *Futûhât*, III, 94:16.
16. Qur'an, 112.
17. Chittick, *Sufi Path*, pp. 337–8; *Futûhât*, III, 465:3,25.
18. Chittick, *Sufi Path*, p. 336; *Futûhât*, II, 311:25.
19. Chittick, *Sufi Path*, p. 336; *Futûhât*, I, 266:18.
20. Chittick, *Sufi Path*, p. 336; *Futûhât*, I, 266:15.
21. Chittick, *Sufi Path*, p. 336; *Futûhât*, II, 683:19.
22. Daniel, *Making of an Image*, p. 190.
23. *Blackfriars*, Feb. [redacted] issue, devoted [redacted] Islam.
24. Ed. Enelow, New York, 1934, p. 121.
25. Fourth Lateran Council, 1215.
26. I Peter 3:21–2.
27. 2 Peter 2:5.
28. 1 Peter 3:20, following the analysis of this difficult [redacted] by [redacted] W.J. Dalton: *Christ's Proclamation to the Spirits*, 1965, Pontifical Biblical Institute, Rome.
29. Matthew 24:37; Luke 17:28.
30. Dr Netton, [redacted] *Transcendent*, Routledge, [redacted]
31. Ibid., p. 326.
32. Ibid., p. 332.

33. Ibid., p. 164.
34. Chittick, *Sufi Path*, p. 283; *Futûhât*, II, 72:9.
35. I Timothy 2:4–5.
36. Chittick, *Sufi Path*, p. 363; *Futûhât*, II, 177:4.
37. Chittick, *Sufi Path*, p. 362.
38. Qur'an, 90:8–10.
39. *De Veritate*, 14:11.
40. St Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, I°2ᵃᵉ 89:6.
41. Chittick, *Sufi Path*, p. 197.
42. Cf. Rahner, *Theological Investigations*, Vol. 10, p. 46.
43. Ibid., Vol. 11, p. 52.
44. Ibid., Vol. 9 p. 162.
45. Letters 6:1–2.
46. The earliest instance of the saying is Clement of Alexandria (AD150–217), [redacted] *Pedagogue*; cf. 'Notes on the more than [redacted] saying . . .' in *JMIAS*, XI, 1992.
47. *Theo. Invest.*, Vol. 14:288–90.
48. Chittick, *Sufi Path*, pp. 186–8; *Futûhât*, II, 306:9.
49. *Sufi Path*, pp. 187–8.

Ibn 'Arabi in the Later Islamic Tradition

ALEXANDER KNYSH

The importance of Ibn 'Arabi for the subsequent generations of his co-religionists can be easily deduced from numerous references to his name in Muslim biographical and theological writings, on the one hand, and from many anecdotes about his life that still circulate among Muslims, on the other. One of these anecdotes communicated to me by a Syrian friend of mine made me put off my study of Ibn 'Arabi's work for a while in order to look more closely into one aspect of his heritage that is very familiar to the Western reader. The anecdote refers to the last period of the Shaykh's life in Damascus, where he was regarded as the greatest authority in the field of Islamic esotericism. He had there many ardent followers and no less ardent opponents,[1] who were suspicious of his theosophic speculations, which they criticized as inconsistent with 'orthodox' Islam. Once he was passing by the house of a rich Damascene merchant, who was sitting on the bench surrounded by his friends and customers. The merchant asked Ibn 'Arabi to stop for a moment, and to disclose some of those divine mysteries that had been bestowed upon him by God. The Shaykh looked at him attentively and said: 'Your God is under your feet.' The face and all those around him were disgusted by this blasphemous reply. They began to insult him and accuse him of heresy more than the one professed by the Jews and the Christians. Ibn 'Arabi answered not a word, and went away. Soon afterwards the merchant died. His heirs started the reconstruction of the house, and as they were digging the ground in the place where the merchant's bench had stood, they discovered a pot of gold. Immediately, the meaning of Ibn 'Arabi's words became clear to everyone.

This story, I assume, reflects what may be called the *survie* of al-Shaykh al-Akbar in the collective memory of Muslim community. His 'public image' differs dramatically from the one maintained by the Muslim intellectual élite, biased to emphasize the achievements as a philosopher and a mystic. I dare say that the latter attitude has in due course resulted in a certain degree of idealization of the Shaykh's personality and legacy, since it tended (quite naturally) to ignore a more mundane view of him, which is spread in the Islamic milieu. The same attitude, I believe, has prevailed among many European Orientalists beginning with H.S. Nyberg's classic study. They have for the most part

interested in [illegible] investigation of the intellectual depths [illegible] by al-Shaykh al-Akbar and some of [illegible] followers, while neglecting how they were perceived by the majority of Muslims [illegible] of [illegible] subtleties of their thought.

The story that I have mentioned above prompted me to examine Ibn 'Arabi's image [illegible] reflected [illegible] [illegible] somewhat lower level of understanding [illegible] assessment, which is characteristic of [illegible] more [illegible] less narrow scholasticism, on the one hand, and an unenlightened tradition and belief, [illegible] the other. Of course, I [illegible] well [illegible] that the polemic provoked by Ibn 'Arabi's daring insights into the [illegible] of Islamic religion [illegible] mentioned in [illegible] Western studies of the Shaykh and his thought. This is true, but I believe that such general references are not very enlightening, because they usually tend to dismiss particulars, which, trivial [illegible] they are, may be very helpful in modifying the conception of Ibn 'Arabi elaborated by long tradition of his academic study. I have [illegible] admit that the means for fulfilling this ambitious task is both extremely incomplete and one-sided, because I [illegible] basing myself [illegible] biographical and polemical writings by medieval Arabic authors, leaving [illegible] [illegible] Persian, Turkish, Urdu, etc. [illegible] related to the subject. Moreover, I focus [illegible] the writings easily accessible to the specialists in [illegible] field. Yet at the [illegible] time I also [illegible] some less widely known facts concerning [illegible] debates between the Shaykh's adepts and opponents which took place [illegible] the Yemen in the eighth–ninth/fourteenth–fifteenth centuries.

It [illegible] in Arabic biographical writings that [illegible] initially discovers [illegible] striking diversity of opinions with respect to Ibn 'Arabi expressed by the *'ulamâ'*. Most of them concede that he [illegible] an outstanding scholar endowed with great talents, though their appraisal [illegible] by no means unequivocal. Thus, for instance, Shams al-din al-Dhahabi, who died 110 years after al-Shaykh al-Akbar, points out that:

> he showed eloquence in speech and {considerable} wit. He [illegible] endowed with a good mind and memory, and was sophisticated in the field of Sufism. He has left [illegible] [illegible] number of writings about gnosis (*'irfân*). If only he had not had ecstatic utterances in his prose and poetry . . .'[2]

That the same attitude was common with [illegible] Muslim scholars is suggested by [illegible] famous [illegible] expert Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani (d. 852/1448), who like al-Dhahabi, is ill-disposed toward Ibn 'Arabi and his ideas: 'He [illegible] among those who [illegible] condemned [illegible] thought of badly, but he had good knowledge of the tradition and the Sunna. He also partook in other disciplines. He learned [illegible] from many scholars.'[3] The Egyptian Sufi and *faqîh*, Ibn Abi 'l-Mansur (d. 682/1283)[4], cited by Ibn Hajar, is less reserved in his appreciation of Ibn 'Arabi's personality:

> [illegible] the [illegible] scholar of [illegible] [Sufi] Way, who combined [illegible] knowledge acquired by means of learning with that bestowed upon him [by God]. The *tawhid* [i.e. the concept of God's uniqueness] [illegible] him in his knowledge, moral principles [illegible] spiritual [illegible] paid no attention to his outward existence, whether it was tolerable [illegible] insupportable.[5]

A reference [illegible] the doctrinal affiliation, which constitutes [illegible] almost indispensable part of most Muslim biographical accounts, is, in the [illegible] of Ibn 'Arabi, substituted by a rather obscure remark attributed [illegible] Ibn Musdi (d. 663/1265)[6] who described the Shaykh as an adept of the Zahiri school of law with respect to religious practice (*'ibâdâ*), and yet an adherent of the esoteric approach toward doctrinal beliefs.[7] The absence of [illegible] determined affiliation to any traditional school is corroborated by some biographers' reference to Ibn 'Arabi's own verses:

> The Merciful has prohibited to [blindly]
> follow Malik, Ahmad,
> al-Nu'man and any other, so excuse me . . .[8]
> I [illegible] not the one who says: 'Ibn Hazm
> said no, Ahmad said no too,
> and al-Nu'man ~ no . . .'[9]

'This', maintains Ibn al-'Imad, 'is a strong argument in favour of his absolute *ijtihâd* (i.e. an ability to pronounce independent judgements [illegible] religious matters)[10] . . . and if he was not a *mujtahid*, then there was [illegible] *mujtahid* in the God's creation.'[11]

It is [illegible] the only instance when biographers let Ibn 'Arabi speak for himself. They had a special liking for his, from the modern point of view, somewhat immodest statement: 'I know [God's] greatest name and alchemy by means of revelation (*munâzala*, or *tanazzul*), and not through acquisition (*kasb*, or *takassub*).'[12] It should be noted that all these more or less haphazardly selected statements [illegible] used by the authors [illegible] corroboration of their view of Ibn 'Arabi (a *mujtahid*, [illegible] great gnostic etc.), and not [illegible] of characterizing him objectively.

Naturally enough, Ibn 'Arabi's activities [illegible] Sufi [illegible] of special [illegible] to those who wrote about him. To the [illegible] that have already been mentioned above, [illegible] add the words of Ibn Musdi, who reports that Ibn 'Arabi was so highly respected by the Sufis of [illegible] time that they conferred on him the title 'al-Qushayri' in honour of Abu 'l-Qasim al-Qushayri (d. 465/1072), the author of the standard Sufi manual *al-Risâla fi 'l-Tasawwuf*.[13] In the same vein is the [illegible] by Ibn al-Madyani (or al-Madini): 'He had [illegible] predisposition for [illegible] way of the people of truth (*ahl al-haqîqa*), [illegible] firmly established in ascetic exercises, [illegible] of devotion, and reasoning [illegible] the language of Sufis.'[14]

[illegible] achievements in the [illegible] of Sufism, his literary talent is also duly stressed. The historian Ibn al-Najjar (d. 643/1245), who

personally [illegible] Ibn 'Arabi in Baghdad in 608/1211, is often quoted in this connection. He mentioned the Shaykh's 'pleasant speech' and 'good verses', [illegible] of which he decided to write down.[15] Ibn al-'Imad [illegible] al-Maqqari illustrate his poetic gift by numerous quotations from his *Dîwân*.[16] Having read all these statements made by the biographers, one may detect one of their important implications – [illegible] endeavour [illegible] place Ibn 'Arabi's controversial figure in [illegible] more familiar context and [illegible] less subtle frame of reference. To this end, they desperately searched for the authorities who would give them a straight [illegible] to the question: What [illegible] Ibn 'Arabi – [illegible] saint (*walî*) [illegible] a heretic (*zindîq*)? At this point they had to determine their attitude to [illegible] personality, and thus [illegible] get engaged in a controversy over his heritage. Very often those authors [illegible] unable to comprehend the subtleties of his teaching and had [illegible] focus either on the Shaykh's personal dimensions, or on his randomly selected statements, many of which may be interpreted as 'heterodox'.[17] Depending on the biographer's predilection for Ibn 'Arabi, or his suspicion of the Shaykh's thought, the latter appeared in [illegible] good or [illegible] bad light.

For example, al-Safadi, al-Kutubi, al-Maqqari and other authors who gave [illegible] positive assessment of the Shaykh's contribution to the Muslim tradition, never failed [illegible] recount [illegible] episode of his life where the Muslim ruler of Anatolia had granted him a large house (*dâr*) that cost 100,000 dirhams. Soon after Ibn 'Arabi had moved in, [illegible] beggar [illegible] [illegible] him [illegible] asked 'something for God'.[18] The Shaykh had [illegible] other possessions but the house, so he gave it to the beggar.

As if trying to be impartial, al-Safadi mentions another story that portrays Ibn 'Arabi in a less favourable light.[19] It is noteworthy that its origin can be traced back to the Shaykh al-Islam 'Izz al-din Ibn 'Abd al-Salam (d. 660/1261),[20] whose ambiguous attitude towards Ibn 'Arabi is frequently mentioned by medieval scholars. When asked about the Shaykh, 'Izz al-din defined him [illegible] 'a master of evil' (*shaykh su'*), 'a liar', who had maintained 'the eternity of the Universe',[21] [illegible] had not 'proscribed fornication'.[22] To illustrate his 'lies' 'Izz al-din cites [illegible] rather curious episode. According to him, the Shaykh used to deny the possibility of marriage between a *jinn* and [illegible] human being because [illegible] considered [illegible] *jinn* to be [illegible] subtle spirit, while [illegible] human being, [illegible] argued, [illegible] made of organic matter, [illegible] they could not join. Nevertheless, [illegible] he claimed to have married [illegible] she-*jinn*, who stayed with [illegible] for [illegible] while, then hit him with [illegible] camel's bone and cut his face.[23] It is noteworthy [illegible] al-Safadi, whose position with respect [illegible] Ibn 'Arabi [illegible] [illegible] less positive (e.g. *Lexicon*, 174–5) omits [illegible] 'hot' details of the story mentioned by al-Dhahabi, who [illegible] far less tolerant. The latter reports that the Shaykh had sexual intercourse with the *jinn* and she [illegible] him three children.[24]

If the omission is deliberate, which [illegible] quite probable in view of the

fact that both al-Safadi and al-Dhahabi [redacted] contemporaries [redacted] they both cite the [redacted] chain of transmitters,[25] then we have a good insight into the workings of Muslim historiography with its concept of 'proper', and 'smearing' facts, as well [redacted] the ways they [redacted] used (or misused).

The first impression one [redacted] gain from the biographical [redacted] of Ibn 'Arabi by medieval authors (if, of course, they are not utterly apologetic like al-Qari al-Baghdadi or al-Sha'rani) is that of perplexity and confusion. Curiously enough, exactly the [redacted] impression is conveyed [redacted] the reader of the Shaykh's own works, in which it is achieved by the occasional confrontation of contradictory metaphysical and theological [redacted] that [redacted] equally acceptable to the author. In the Shaykh's biographical [redacted] this effect is produced by quotations of diverse opinions of Ibn 'Arabi belonging to Muslim *'ulamâ'* of various ideological orientations and personal ambitions. These opinions [redacted] [redacted] from outright rejection and accusation of 'heresy' to enthusiastic appreciation and support. But [redacted] the [redacted] favourable judgements often prove [redacted] be rather ambiguous, as, for example, the apology by the famous Egyptian Sufi, 'Abd al-Wahhab al-Sha'rani (d. 573/1565) based on the assumption that all 'dubious' and 'heterodox' [redacted] from the *Fusûs* and the *Futûhât* [redacted] inserted in the original text by some anonymous apostates [redacted] heretics, who wanted to discredit Islam's greatest pillar.[26] The 'corrupted' [redacted] of the Shaykh's writings, according to al-Sha'rani, spread widely among the Muslims, who began to think that all these 'heresies' really belonged to him. However, on the next [redacted] al-Sha'rani contradicts himself, [redacted] he asserts that the corrupted versions of Ibn 'Arabi's book (the 'good' copies seemed to [redacted] extremely rare) [redacted] assiduously studied and commented upon by the *'ulamâ'* throughout the Muslim world.[27]

Equally unfounded [redacted] in favour of the Shaykh's 'orthodoxy' are provided by al-Safadi, who after having read [redacted] 'Arabi's doctrinal statement (*'aqîda*) in the first volume of the *Futûhât*[28] arrived [redacted] the conclusion that it was the same as the orthodox credo of al-Ash'ari [redacted] his followers. What al-Safadi intentionally [redacted] unintentionally ignored was Ibn 'Arabi's unequivocal description of this 'profession of faith' [redacted] the [redacted] addressed to the 'commoners (*'umûm*) [redacted] the people of outward submission' (*islâm*), the people of *taqlîd* (i.e. tradition) and *nazar* (i.e. rational speculation),[29] and [redacted] to those who 'truly realize the divine Truth' (*al-mutahaqqiqun*). It would be difficult to imagine that anyone who has the slightest idea of Ibn 'Arabi's theosophical speculations will find al-Safadi's conclusions satisfactory.[30] Thus, they are brushed aside by one of [redacted] Shaykh's [redacted] merciless critics the Yemeni *faqîh* al-Husayn b. al-Ahdal (d. 855/1480), who being [redacted] disciple of Ibn Hajar inherited his hostile position *vis-à-vis* Ibn 'Arabi and his doctrines.[31] Nevertheless, both al-Safadi's and al-Sha'rani's apologies

have added to the mystification of the Shaykh's image in the [redacted] of posterity.

The same is true with respect to other arguments advanced by Ibn 'Arabi's biographers in order [redacted] explain his departure from usual interpretation of the Muslim tradition. The widely accepted explanation refers to the obscurity of technical terminology employed by the Sufis in general, and Ibn 'Arabi in particular. Many scholars whose view of the Shaykh [redacted] favourable, [redacted] least, tolerant, suggested that his statements [redacted] inconsistent with the 'letter' of the Qur'an and the Sunna should be explained allegorically. It is argued that in the case of correct explanation (which largely depends upon the spiritual stage achieved by the interpreter) all inconsistencies tend [redacted] disappear.[32] As far as unqualified readers are concerned, they are advised to accept Ibn 'Arabi's [redacted] [redacted] they are, and regard him as one of God's saints whose words may appear puzzling but are essentially true. Moreover, his [redacted] can be dangerous to those who fail to understand their true meaning. That is why the Shaykh is said to have prohibited the study of his writings by 'commoners', who may be 'poisoned' by their raving insights.

It is very symptomatic that this dubious solution, to 'think good' of Ibn 'Arabi as [redacted] saint immersed in God's mysteries and to proscribe the study of his works by unqualified readers, has prevailed among Muslim learned men, [redacted] Sufis.[33] This position is elaborated in detail by the famous Arab scholar Jalal al-din al-Suyuti (d. 911/1505) in his treatise *Tanbîh al-ghabî bi-tabri'at Ibn 'Arabi*, written as a refutation of Burhan al-din al-Biqa'i's (d. 875/1470) *Tanbîh al-ghabî bi-takfîr Ibn al-Fârid wa Ibn 'Arabi*.[34] According to al-Suyuti:

1. the attribution to the Shaykh of heretical statements [redacted] [redacted] be proved for sure;
2. if a plausible explanation of such statements is [redacted] available, it should be left to the people of esoteric knowledge (*ahl al-'ilm al-bâtin*);
3. these statements might have been pronounced in the [redacted] of spiritual intoxication, and a drunk is acquitted of his words and deeds; and
4. there is [redacted] way to prove that what is [redacted] by the author of the [redacted] is unbelief, because the knowledge of such things is [redacted] mystery, which belongs to God alone.[35]

The explanations of Ibn 'Arabi's concepts offered by his opponents sound far more detrimental to his reputation. Their origin can also be traced back to al-Dhahabi and his informants, who acquit the Shaykh [redacted] account of his alleged 'madness': 'I do not think,' wrote al-Dhahabi, 'Muhyiddin's [redacted] [redacted] intentional. [redacted] [redacted] his retreat from the world [redacted] fasting that badly affected his health, imagination [redacted] [produced] [redacted] sort of madness.' [redacted]

In [redacted] subsequent polemic this theme has developed into the Shaykh's being accused of drug addiction. For instance al-Husayn b. al-Ahdal

points out that 'he used to [illegible] hashish and other drugs' like the Egyptian poet Ibn al-Farid (d. 632/1235), who resorted to narcotics when be wrote his famous mystical poem *Nazm al-sulûk*.[37] This accusation is but an extreme instance of coming to grips with the complex phenomenon of Ibn 'Arabi on the part of the polemicists who for [illegible] found his views unacceptable and dangerous. However, usually the approach is more ambivalent. It is personified by the above-mentioned 'Izz al-din b. 'Abd al-Salam, who first publicly labelled Ibn 'Arabi as [illegible] 'heretic' (*zindîq*) and [illegible] 'unbeliever' (*kâfir*), but later on, during [illegible] intimate conversation, he called him the spiritual Pole of the Universe (*qutb*). [illegible] explained this contradiction by his [illegible] for the exoteric aspect of Muslim law (*zâhir al-shar'a*) implying that the Shaykh's speculations and utterances might seduce the people whose faith is [illegible] firm into apostasy and antinomian excesses.[38] Thus, the distinction between inner (esoteric) and outer (exoteric) truths maintained by Ibn 'Arabi in his writings became curiously applied to the assessment of his personality and intellectual heritage.

An interesting attempt to work out an independent position with respect to al-Shaykh al-Akbar and his thought [illegible] suggested by al-Dhahabi and repeated by Ibn Hajar:

> If [illegible] thoroughly investigates *Fusûs al-hikam* and subjects [illegible] a close scrutiny, [illegible] will be astounded. A clever man, if he looks into those propositions, their analogies and the related statements, will discover that he [Ibn 'Arabi] is one of two persons: either [illegible] disguised adept of unification [between God and man] (*al-ittihâdiyya*), or [illegible] genuine believer in God, who regards this [illegible] [the unificationists] as [illegible] greatest unbelievers.[39] We had better ask God to pardon [us], [illegible] inscribe in our hearts absolute confidence (*al-iqân*) and to strengthen us with [illegible] firm word in this life and in the future one. By God, to the illiterate Muslim tending his cattle, knowing nothing of religious science but few *sûrahs* from the Qur'an, and believing in God and the Day of Judgement, his knowledge is [illegible] useful [illegible] the gnosis and [illegible] those subtle truths which [illegible] acquires after having read a hundred books, and having stayed in seclusion a hundred times.[40]

This approach suggested by al-Dhahabi and upheld by Ibn Hajar may be described as 'agnostic'. In the final analysis, its origin is traceable to the usual response of those *'ulamâ'*, who [illegible] often identified with Islamic 'orthodoxy'.[41] Such [illegible] position is primarily concerned with the struggle against all kinds of so-called 'innovations' (*bidâ' sing. bid'a*) in religious theory and practice waged by many Muslim theologians, who 'guarded' the exoteric aspects of [illegible] from what might be defined [illegible] the anomic attitude toward the Revelation. Confronted with such [illegible] complex and challenging phenomenon [illegible] Ibn 'Arabi (both a 'literalist' and [illegible] 'antinomianist') this position has produced diverse viewpoints, ranging from furious rejection to unquestioning acceptance of his legacy. But, [illegible] usual in the [illegible] of Islamic theology, this divergence very often reflects [illegible]

much purely ideological differences (nor [illegible] the eternal conflict between narrow-mindedness and so-called 'progressive thought') as a confrontation of individuals or groups of learned men pursuing their quite profane ends.

In sum, one may hypothesize that the image of Ibn 'Arabi provided by the subsequent Islamic tradition is often so ambiguous and contradictory that the reader's final impression is that of bewilderment and perplexity, i.e. exactly the [illegible] that Ibn 'Arabi always sought to induce by his difficult and dialectical writings. In his opinion, this state of mind and spirit helps transcend the established mental categories and judgements,[42] and reach the highest possible understanding of the Reality.[43] Thus [illegible] may say that the Shaykh has achieved his aim, not only by means of his challenging intellectual heritage, but through his whole [illegible] which became a stumbling block for many subsequent generations of Muslims. Any attempt to [illegible] his activities and importance in familiar terms and apply to his multi-dimensional personality customary concepts opens before the scholar new unexplored possibilities and unmeasured depths. His attitude to the new perspectives makes him either take the side of Ibn 'Arabi's adepts, or join his opponents. In any event, even [illegible] partial acquaintance with Ibn 'Arabi's legacy, which lies somewhere [illegible] the neutral ground between more [illegible] less generally acceptable truths and what is usually regarded to be sheer heresy, requires [illegible] considerable spiritual and intellectual effort essential for the further elaboration and even survival of [illegible] religious doctrine.

At [illegible] more general level, the interpretation of Ibn 'Arabi by the Muslims of different orientations has provided an effective antidote against intellectual stagnation of the Islamic community. Moreover, [illegible] [illegible] shall try to show further, Ibn 'Arabi [illegible] developed into [illegible] important cultural symbol, which [illegible] widely used by rival religious and political parties and groups, as well as family clans struggling for influence and domination in the society.

For concrete examples, [illegible] can consult some Arabic chronicles that describe the events concerning [illegible] Shaykh [illegible] [illegible] writings. The debates over his heritage took especially violent forms in Egypt, Syria and Yemen, where practically all intellectuals were engaged in the pro or con polemic. Since the Shaykh's [illegible] objectionable ideas were succinctly formulated in the *Fusûs*, [illegible] [illegible] quite logical that this book turned out to be the focus of the contest.[44] Even those who refrained from passing a final judgement as regards Ibn 'Arabi's 'unbelief' [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] less unanimous in the prohibition of his writings. As al-Dhahabi put it:

> We do [illegible] testify to their [Ibn 'Arabi and the like] belief or unbelief, because there always exists [illegible] possibility of their repentance shortly before death. Besides, their affairs are extremely obscure. As for their writings, they are [illegible] than unbelief. That is why the just kings [illegible] those who lead on the straight way [illegible]

people to study them [illegible] insist [illegible] their destruction. They also forbid people to [illegible] or buy these writings. In 738 AH [i.e. AD 1337] the learned men of Egypt reached [illegible] agreement ordering them to be forsaken [illegible] prohibiting their study. The *qâdî* Badr al-din al-Maliki says [illegible] [at present] [illegible] books by Ibn 'Arabi [illegible] non-existent in both Cairo [illegible] Alexandria, and no [illegible] dares [illegible] to show them in public. If they [illegible] found [in somebody's house] they [illegible] confiscated and burnt. As for the owner, [illegible] is tortured, and if he turns out to be an adept of [the [illegible] expressed in this writing] [illegible] is executed. Once the *Fusûs* was discovered in the book market. It [illegible] [immediately] confiscated, tied up with rope and dragged along the [illegible] to the chief *qâdî*, where it was burnt, for the common good.[45]

A similar episode is described by the famous Yemeni *faqîh* [illegible] poet, Isma'il b. al-Muqri (d. 837/1444),[46] who asserts that [illegible] copy of the *Fusûs* [illegible] attached [illegible] the collar of [illegible] dog, which [illegible] dragged [illegible] the crowded market-place.[47]

Copies of this book are said to have been burnt also in the parts of Yemen that were under the domination of Zaydi *imâms* from Sana'a. This [illegible] done in 1074/1663 by order of the *imâm* al-Mutawakkil 'Ali Isma'il,[48] who regarded the *Fusûs* as 'sheer unbelief' (*kufr mahd*).[49]

Salih b. Mahdi al-Maqbali (d. 1108/1599), a Zaydi historian, mentions [illegible] peculiar story in which [illegible] Zaydi *imâm* of the Qasimite dynasty is involved.[50] He had [illegible] paralytic concubine whose illness [illegible] beyond hope. Once a learned [illegible] – probably an adherent of Ibn 'Arabi – presented the *imâm* with [illegible] copy of the *Fusûs*. The latter ordered it to be burnt in [illegible] stove and some bread to be baked on its fire. After that the concubine [illegible] given this bread. As soon [illegible] she ate it, she recovered from her illness. When the *imâm* learned about it, he said: 'This miracle [illegible] surpassed all Ibn 'Arabi's miracles.'[51] Such stories are presumably mentioned by the Shaykh's opponents in order to convey the idea that burning his writings is [illegible] only permissible, but necessary and [illegible] wholesome.

It should be noted that such a method of destruction of the Shaykh's books was objected to by some *'ulamâ'*, who were of the opinion that though they deserved elimination, they should [illegible] be burnt since they contained Quranic [illegible] and the [illegible] of God. On these grounds certain scholars suggested that the [illegible] of the *Fusûs* [illegible] be washed off, after which the blank pages [illegible] be burnt. Despite this radical solution upheld by many *'ulamâ'*, [illegible] practical level the attitude towards Ibn 'Arabi's writings [illegible] so definite and unequivocal. An illuminating example of this is provided by the Egyptian historian Ibn Iyas (d. 930/1524). Recounting the events that took place in Egypt in the year of 888/1483, he wrote:

> In this year Shams al-din al-Hulaybi [illegible] present during [illegible] inventory of the belongings of Yahya b. Hajami. As he [illegible] examining the books [mentioned in

the inventory] he came across *Fusûs al-hikam* by Ibn 'Arabi. This book, [illegible] said, should be burnt, because Ibn 'Arabi [illegible] unbeliever, whose unbelief was [illegible] professed by the Jews and the Christians, or even [illegible] heathens who [illegible] ship idols. Those who [illegible] present told him: 'How [illegible] you burn *al-Fusûs* which includes quotations from the God's speech?' 'Even if it is so!' he replied. He [illegible] put [illegible] the record [for saying such blasphemy] and accused of unbelief, [illegible] [illegible] to [illegible] to the help of Ibn Muzhir the Chancellor, who took sides with him. The [illegible] of the affair [illegible] that he [illegible] publicly reprimanded and deprived of his turban [i.e. of his position]. However, his affiliation to the Islamic religion was confirmed and he was pardoned. On account of this event his career was ruined. The poet described [illegible] follows:

> Hulaybi, you were [illegible] by [illegible] blow [illegible] [illegible] of your head,
> When you ignorantly demanded the burning of the *Fusûs*,
> oh, you unbeliever![32]

This episode contradicts the impression given by al-Sakhawi, Ibn al-Muqri and other critics of the Shaykh, who maintained that his books and teaching were extremely unpopular in the Egyptian society in the ninth-tenth/fifteenth-sixteenth centuries. At the same time, several details of the story imply that the conflict was not so much ideological [illegible] social in its nature. Beside al-Hulaybi one may discern the figure of [illegible] anonymous champion of 'orthodoxy', who successfuly removed his rival by skilfully bringing into play ideological divergences and theological problems of his epoch.

A similar combination of conflicting theological views and mundane interests might be observed in the episode with the *faqîh* Burhan al-din al-Biqa'i (d. 885/1480), whose intransigent opposition to the theosophical Sufi speculation in general, and Ibn 'Arabi and Ibn al-Farid in particular, aroused a wave of indignation on the part of rival *'ulamâ'*, who must have used it [illegible] a pretext for his expulsion from Egypt.[33] The real cause behind this expulsion seems [illegible] lie in al-Biqa'i's excessive purism in religious affairs, which induced him to undertake ruthless attacks [illegible] his colleagues and [illegible] his teachers.[34] It may well be that al-Biqa'i's position *vis-à-vis* the controversial issue of Ibn 'Arabi's 'orthodoxy' helped his opponents [illegible] get rid of their detractor.

[illegible] any case, al-Biqa'i's insistence [illegible] the Shaykh's heterodoxy caused heated theological debates in the Egyptian intellectual milieu. The Shaykh's numerous followers 'began to defend him in their [illegible] that spread widely among [illegible] people.' An example of [illegible] attributed to [illegible] certain al-Mansuri is provided by Ibn Iyas:

> Indeed, al-Biqa'i [illegible] wanted for his words
> Do not think him to be right, for his heart will be
> punished . . . [illegible]

Apart from the verses, al-Biqa'i's condemnation of [illegible] 'Arabi provoked

a good deal of learned refutations in prose, of which al-Suyuti's *Tanbîh* (see above) is but [redacted] example. Such apologies usually include judgements and opinions in favour of the Shaykh expressed by outstanding *'ulamâ'*.

An active propagation of his ideas is also mentioned in the [redacted] According to al-Sakhawi, about this time Ibn 'Arabi's teaching was popularized by [redacted] certain 'Abd al-Wahhab b. al-Taj, who spread it 'in learned gatherings and in the market-place' of Cairo.[56] This means that despite strong opposition, Ibn 'Arabi's adherents [redacted] allowed to disseminate their views among different [redacted] of the [redacted] community. Their ability [redacted] do this largely depended upon the support or disapproval of high-ranking government officials, *emirs*, *wazirs*, etc., who in their turn pursued their political interests and satisfied their ambitions.

The fact that Ibn 'Arabi's name was involved in these and many other conflicts which took place in different parts of the Muslim world, illustrates his importance [redacted] an ideological symbol. This symbol is brought into play in order to describe and formulate social and/or personal antagonisms, the real (usually more mundane) motives of which tend to be hidden. Several instances of such a role of Ibn 'Arabi, or, [redacted] more exact, of his symbolic representation, can be found in the episodes from the history of Yemen under the Rasulid dynasty, with the capital in Ta'izz (632/1235–858/1454).[57] The Rasulids appeared to be ardent supporters of the Shaykh's teaching, who took pains to make a wonderful collection of his writings.[58] Their example [redacted] eagerly followed by their subjects who began to copy, buy [redacted] sell Ibn 'Arabi's books.[59] Under these circumstances the Shaykh's supporters, many of whom had arrived from far-away lands such as Syria, Palestine, Iran, etc., succeeded in gaining high positions in the Rasulid court. It [redacted] quite natural that their promotion caused considerable discontent [redacted] the part of [redacted] native scholars, who organized a massive attack on the Shaykh's heritage aimed at discrediting the ideological premises used by their rivals.

Pragmatic aspects of the polemic are aptly illustrated by the evolution of Ibn al-Muqri's position with regard [redacted] Ibn 'Arabi. His initial view of the Shaykh seems to have been neutral, if not sympathetic. As his prestige and ambition increased, he began to aspire to the rank of the chief *qâdî* of the Rasulid state. The appointment to this post of Ahmad al-Raddad (d. 821/1418)[60] by order of the Sultan al-Nasir (d. 827/1424) was [redacted] great blow to Ibn al-Muqri. It should be noted that al-Raddad was considered a major figure in the 'school' of Ibn 'Arabi in Yemen,[61] which [redacted] have prompted al-Nasir's choice, since the Sultan's predilection for the Shaykh's teaching is mentioned by many historians.[62] From then onwards, Ibn al-Muqri's attitude towards Ibn 'Arabi radically

changed. He began to criticize his ideas [illegible] him of 'heresy'.[43] [illegible] did not even hesitate to testify to the unbelief of all those who refused [illegible] join his accusation.[44] All in all, his condemnation of Ibn 'Arabi (in many points inaccurate [illegible] superficial) [illegible] to undermine Ahmad al-Raddad's influence [illegible] the [illegible] court, [illegible] [illegible] ruin his reputation [illegible] [illegible] scholar. The latter responded violently by organizing [illegible] raid on Ibn al-Muqri's house, who had to take refuge in a sacred territory under the protection of [illegible] local saint, Ahmad b. 'Uqayl.[45]

This is but one episode from the long struggle between the Shaykh's admirers and detractors in Yemen. It was especially violent in the town of Zabid, where the [illegible] prominent Yemeni scholars of the epoch were concentrated. Among them was the famous Arab lexicographer, Majd al-din al-Fayruzabadi (d. 817/1415),[46] who had been appointed chief *qâdî* of Yemen by the Rasulid Sultan al-Ashraf (d. 817/1401), the father of al-Nasir. The scholar, soon after his arrival [illegible] the [illegible] capital, found himself engaged in the pro-and con-Ibn 'Arabi polemic, in which he sided with his adherents, against his opponents [illegible] by Abu Bakr b. al-Khayyat (d. 811/1408). The latter wrote a refutation of al-Fayruzabadi's commentary [illegible] al-Bukhari's *al-Sahîh* that [illegible] said to have been 'lavishly decorated' by the author with numerous quotations from the Shaykh's writings.[47] Again the contention should [illegible] [illegible] treated as purely theological in nature, though both polemicists would like to represent it as such. One may assume that al-Fayruzabadi, who [illegible] held in great [illegible] by the Sultan (who even gave him his daughter in marriage), [illegible] [illegible] natural rival for Ibn al-Khayyat, who aspired [illegible] become [illegible] major religious authority in the Rasulid state. Seen from this viewpoint, his critique of al-Fayruzabadi's ideological allegiances [illegible] aimed [illegible] arousing suspicion of the latter's competence [illegible] the great *qâdî* of Yemen.

The conflict should be discussed in [illegible] broader context. Ibn al-Khayyat's criticism of al-Fayruzabadi's position [illegible] [illegible] part of [illegible] major campaign against Ibn 'Arabi's adherents organized by an influential group of Yemeni *'ulamâ'* during the reign of al-Ashraf and al-Nasir, both of whom patronized philosophical Sufism. Under the instigation of the latter, al-Fayruzabadi composed his widely known apology of the Shaykh, which is [illegible] collection of authoritative judgements and [illegible] by Muslim scholars, who had confirmed the Shaykh's 'orthodoxy' and his 'sainthood'. The apology also contained [illegible] lot of anecdotes, which portrayed Ibn 'Arabi both as a pious ascetic and [illegible] venerated scholar. The chronological and factual analysis of al-Fayruzabadi's narratives carried [illegible] by Claude Addas[48] shows that the greater part of these anecdotes [illegible] fabricated, either by the author himself or by his informants, in order [illegible] defend Ibn 'Arabi's reputation.

Al-Fayruzabadi's effort to comply with al-Nasir's wish to justify Ibn

'Arabi in the eyes of his subjects brought about his accusation of servility and hypocrisy on the part of al-Sakhawi,[69] who insisted that the scholar inwardly had detested the Shaykh's teaching. Such an [illegible] tion can be dismissed as improbable in view of al-Sakhawi's unceasing opposition towards Ibn 'Arabi and his followers.

Again [illegible] have [illegible] insight into the methods of medieval Muslim polemicists: calling into question al-Fayruzabadi's honesty is [illegible] way to discredit his argument in favour of the Shaykh's 'orthodoxy'. Be this as it may, the apology of al-Fayruzabadi is responsible for many legends about Ibn 'Arabi that have given birth to his 'public image' eagerly accepted by Muslims, whose attitude to him [illegible] be defined [illegible] positive or neutral/agnostic.

It might be assumed that al-Nasir's position [illegible] the conflict is [illegible] unequivocally pro-Sufi as it may look [illegible] first sight. He [illegible] probably profiting from the learned men's quarrel, maintaining a balance between [illegible] rivalling parties whose disagreement in the long run guaranteed him effective control of the situation in [illegible] country where religious leaders enjoyed considerable popular support. Considering the fact that the party of Ibn 'Arabi's followers was less [illegible] than the [illegible] formed by [illegible] opponents, al-Nasir [illegible] to have stressed his pro-Sufi sympathies in order to counterbalance the anti-Sufi campaign. In fact, he [illegible] [illegible] far in his support of Sufis and was able [illegible] retract his opinion when he [illegible] it was necessary.[70]

Of course, al-Nasir's position could have been a result of his genuine liking for the Shaykh and his teaching, but nevertheless, there is little doubt that it was intricately interwoven with his [illegible] policy and, in the end, subordinate to it.

The same sort of mixture of personal intellectual disposition, pragmatic reasons and political intentions can be observed in [illegible] instances of confrontation over Ibn 'Arabi's legacy both in Yemen and elsewhere. One may multiply examples *ad infinitum*. Of course, what his supporters and opponents had in mind usually was [illegible] Ibn 'Arabi, but his symbolic representation, which had little or nothing to do with [illegible] personality as it appears from autobiographical passages of the [illegible] [illegible] his other writings.[71]

What [illegible] have before [illegible] is [illegible] ideological symbol usually represented either in what might be called 'personal terms' (i.e. a saint, a teacher, [illegible] pious man, a victim of ignorant people, etc., on the one hand, and [illegible] wicked man, a libertine, a liar, a heretic, etc., on the other) or, [illegible] a [illegible] abstract level, as a philosopher and metaphysician responsible for [illegible] troversial, obscure and sometimes scandalous [illegible]

Stressing the [illegible] between the 'real' Ibn 'Arabi, and his image shaped by [illegible] subsequent Islamic tradition [illegible] polemic, [illegible] should not overlook the common feature of both: their controversial character,

which makes them an ideal starting point for all kinds of debates. The Shaykh's image invested with either positive (al-Fayruzabadi's tradition) negative (Ibn 'Abd al-Salam's tradition) qualities may be treated as a sort of illustration of his famous thesis concerning 'the God created in belief'.[72] Paraphrasing his words: He is what people think Him to be, however far is their notion from the reality. If we further extend this daring (or maybe far-fetched) comparison, can assume that Ibn 'Arabi is understood by any in accordance with his eternal 'predisposition' (*istiʿdâd*),[73] and ability grasp the subtleties of the Shaykh's personality and thought. In this regard, seems to have shared the fate of almost all great men, who usually lose their true identity popularity and end up ideological symbols and political slogans. A great number of his principles have been corrupted by both his followers and opponents. The former, often unaware of their true implications, more than once reduced them to religious and social irresponsibility and license, while the latter, who advocated strict adherence to the letter of *sharʿa*, failed to grasp their potential impor- for the revival of Islam on a spiritual and intellectual basis.[74]

What has been appropriated by the popular Islamic tradition is a bunch of conflicting theme melodies accompanying his name: accusations of *hulûl, ittihâd* and other heresies contrasted to declarations of his 'orthodoxy' and 'sainthood'; denunciation of his anomic behaviour and blasphemous sayings, contrasted to assertion of his piety and asceticism. No wonder that the final impression of the audience usually was one of perplexity and bewilderment which, incidentally, corresponds to the central epistemological principle of Ibn 'Arabi, and which very often leads to an agnostic solution shared by many unbiased Muslim scholars.

As far posthumous attacks against the Shaykh are concerned, they in fact levelled at his followers who used his name as a motto, if not as a shield. That is why a great number of such attacks rather wide of the mark. This is especially true with regard to Ibn 'Arabi's alleged advocacy of antinomian attitude, sexual license, ecstatic Sufi dances, use of musical instruments, etc.[75] All these accusations stan- dard enough for the Muslim polemical literature, and, therefore, should be taken at face value. However, number of anecdotes describing the excesses practised by Ibn 'Arabi's admirers[76] may well be true, considering possible anomic conclusions that can be drawn from some of his daring insights by an unprepared audience. In any case, being a symbol presupposes justified as well as unjustified attributions and suppositions, which contribute towards the further shaping of image. Thus present a process of dogmatization accompanied by a constant reinterpretation of several premises, of which, in their turn, to be sheer inventions. Of course, an effort towards an adequate understanding of Ibn 'Arabi's personality and teaching is always there,[77]

but it is insignificant in comparison with the bulk of secondary Muslim literature referring to him, and it was his 'popular image', created by those unaware of the real dimensions of his heritage, that has defined the general attitude towards the Shaykh in the Muslim world.

To a certain extent, the fate of his legacy may be regarded as tragic because it was fully appreciated only by a very limited number of those who claimed to be his followers. But, eventually, this is quite logical, since the seeds of his complicated thought have fallen on the uneven soil, and could not but bring different fruits. In any event, it has formed an apt frame of reference for ideological clashes which have shaken the world of Islam since his time. As a result, Ibn 'Arabi's image has undergone serious distortions. Nevertheless, being a part of his legacy, it well deserves a close examination, towards which this paper is but a first step.

NOTES

1. For a detailed account of this period of his life see Addas, *La quête*, pp. 289–337.
2. Al-Safadi, *Lexicon*, p. 175; al-Kutubi, *Fawât*, p. 241; al-Maqqari, *Nafh*, p. 569; Abu Tayyib, *Al-Tâj*, p. 175.
3. Ibn Hajar, *Lisân*, p. 315; Ibn al-'Imad, *Shadharât*, 5, p. [illegible]
4. The *Risâla* has recently seen the light in the superb edition of D. Gril. *La [illegible] de Safi al-din Ibn Abi'l-Mansur Ibn Zafir. Biographies des maîtres spirituels connus par un cheikh égyptien du VII/XIII siècle*. Introd., éd., et trad. par Denis Gril. Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale du Caire, 1986.
5. Ibn Hajar, *Lisân*, p. 315; Ibn al-'Imad, *Shadharat*, 5, p. 196; al-Maqqari, *Nafh*, p. 571.
6. He was Ibn 'Arabi's compatriot born in Granada and murdered in Mecca in 663/1265. His biographical writings, which include accounts of the Shaykh's life, have not been published yet. Kahhala, *Mu'jam*, 12, p. 140.
7. Al-Safadi, *Lexicon* p. 173; Ibn Hajar, *Lisân*, p. 314; al-Kutubi, *Fawât*, p. 241; al-Maqqari, *Nafh*, p. [illegible] This important question is discussed at length in: M. Chodkiewicz, *Ibn 'Arabi: la lettre et la loi*. Actes du colloque: Mystique, culture et société. Paris, 1983, 27–40. Cf. Deladrière. *La Profession, pp. xxxvii–xxxviii.*
8. Here the founders of the major Sunni persuasions (*madhâhib* sing. *madhhab*) are named – Ahmad b. [illegible] (d. 241/855), [illegible] b. [illegible] (d. 179/795), Abu Hanifa al-Nu'man b. Thabit (d. 150/767).
9. Ibn 'Imad, *Shadharât*, 5, p. 200. For Ibn Hazm see I. Goldziher, *The Zahiris, their doctrine and their history*. Trans. and ed. by Wolfgang Behn. Leiden, 1971, and R. Arnaldez, Ibn Hazm – *Encyclopedia of Islam* (*EI*), new edition (NE). E.J. Brill, Leiden, 3, pp. 814–22.
10. For *ijtihâd* and *mujtahid* see D.B. [illegible] and J. Schacht. *Ijtihâd* – *EI*, NE, pp. 1026–927.
11. Ibn al-'Imad, *Shadharât*, 5, p. 200.

12. Al-Safadi, *Lexicon*, p. 175; [illegible] al-'Imad, *Shadharât*, 5, p. [illegible] al-Maqqari, *Nafh*, p. 575; Abu Tayyib, *Al-Tâj*, p. 175.
13. Ibn Hajar, *Lisân*, p. 314. For the author [illegible] work [illegible] *al-Qusayri's über* [illegible] *Sufitum*. Eingeleitet, übersetzt, und kommentiert von Richard Gramlich. Stuttgart, 1989.
14. Ibid.
15. Al-Safadi, *Lexicon*, p. 178; Ibn Hajar, *Lisân*, p. 314; al-Maqqari, *Nafh*, p. [illegible] Cf. [illegible] similar [illegible] by Ibn Musdi, who describes Ibn 'Arabi's literary achievement as second to none. Al-Maqqari, *Nafh*, p. [illegible]
16. Ibn al-'Imad, *Shadharât*, 5, pp. 194, 198–201; al-Maqqari, *Nafh*, pp. 570–5, 580–3.
17. Usually Ibn 'Arabi [illegible] for:

    [illegible] – identifying God with the Universe (*al-haqq wa-l-khalq*), and its particular [illegible] such [illegible] 'unification' (*ittihâd*) and 'incarnation' (*hulûl*) e.g. Ibn al-'Imad, *Shadharât*, 5, p. 201; Ibn al-Ahdal, *Kashf*, pp. 185–6, pp. 203–4 [illegible] passim; idem. *Mukhtasar*, 4b–5a and passim; al-Wakil, *Masra'*, passim. The [illegible] accusation is mentioned in [illegible] *fatâwî* and *rudûd* [illegible] by O. [illegible] in [illegible] *et Classification*, 1, pp. 114–17, 122–32; [illegible] also Ibn al-Ahdal, *Kashf*, pp. 208–13; cf. al-'Azzawi, *Ghulât*, pp. 142–3 and 'Abd al-Majid, *Naqd*, 157–61;

    b. – esoteric [illegible] of interpretation of the Qur'an (*ta'wîlât bâtiniyya*) which Ibn al-Ahdal once described [illegible] 'making mockery of the Revelation', *Mukhtasar*, 2a–b; see also ibid., 29b–30a and *Kashf*, passim. This kind of exegesis often [illegible] Ibn 'Arabi to such controversial, from the traditional viewpoint, statements [illegible] 'Pharaoh's faith' (*imân fir'awn*) [illegible] the like, [illegible] al-Ahdal, *Kashf*, pp. 188–9; for [illegible] [illegible] detailed [illegible] of the Shaykh's view of Pharaoh [illegible] Austin, *Bezels*, pp. 249–50, 254–5; D. Gril, Le personnage coranique de Pharaon d'après l'interprétation d'Ibn 'Arabi, – *Annales Islamologiques*, 14 (1978), 37–57;

    c. – misinterpretation of relations between [illegible] prophet and [illegible] saint in favour of the latter, [illegible] well [illegible] the concept of the 'seal of saints or saintliness', which [illegible] regarded by many *'ulamâ'* as [illegible] 'abolition' of Muhammad's prophetic mission: Ibn al-Ahdal, *Kashf*, p. 187; 'Abd al-Majid, *Naqd*, pp. 162–4.

    All other accusations are [illegible] [illegible] rule derivative from those mentioned above. It should be noted that they [illegible] be traced back to the common source, i.e. Ibn Taymiyya (d. 728/1328): for details [illegible] 'Abd al-Majid, *Naqd*.
18. A usual formula of begging.
19. This story with slight variations is recounted by al-Dhahabi, *Mîzân*, p. 309; Ibn Hajar, *Lisân*, p. 311. [illegible] also Addas, *La quête*, pp. 297–8.
20. For his biography [illegible] Ibn al-'Imad, *Shadharât*, 5, pp. 301–2.
21. This argument was frequently [illegible] by those *'ulamâ'* who regarded [illegible] [illegible] *faylasûf*. See, for example, Ibn al-Ahdal, *Kashf*, pp. 182–3.
22. Al-Safadi, *Lexicon*, p. 174. Cf. Ibn al-Ahdal, *Kashf*, pp. 185, 207. The latter corroborates Ibn 'Abd al-Salam's words by reference [illegible] the similar opinion of other scholars.
23. Al-Safadi, *Lexicon*, p. 174.
24. Al-Dhahabi, *Mîzân*, p. 108.
25. For one of those transmitters, *imâm* Ibn Daqiq al-'Id (d. 702/1302) see al-Kutubi, *Fawât*, pp. 244–9; he was [illegible] 'Abd al-Salam's disciple.

26. Al-Sha'rani, *Al-Yawâqit*, 1, p. 6.
27. Al-Sha'rani, *Al-Yawâqit*, 1, pp. 8, 9.
28. See O. Yahia's edition, 1, 36.6–38.3.
29. Morris. Ibn 'Arabi, 2, p. 733.
30. Ibn al-Ahdal, *Mukhtasar*, 29a–30b. For further examples of this [illegible] of 'pious fraud' [illegible] Deladrière, *La Profession*. They [illegible] discussed in Morris, *Ibn 'Arabi*, 2, p. 744.
31. Al-Ahdal, *Mukhtasar*, 29b–30a.
32. Al-Suyuti, *Tanbîh*, 44a–b; [illegible] al-'Imad, *Shadharât*, 5, pp. 191–2; Abu Tayyib, *Al-Tâj*, p. 179; al-Maqqari, *Nafh*, pp. 577, 581–2.
33. An excellent example of such irenic attitudes towards [illegible] 'Arabi [illegible] given by Abu Bakr al-'Aydarus (d. 914/1508), an outstanding South Arabian Sufi, who [illegible] regarded [illegible] the patron saint of Aden. (For his biography see Ibn al-'Imad, *Shadharât*, 8, pp. 39–40; al-Sakhawi, *Al-Daw'*, 5, p. 16; O. Löfgren, 'Aydarus – *EI*, NE, 1, pp. 780–2.)

    He wrote: 'I [illegible] remember my father beating or scolding me, except [illegible] when he [illegible] in my hands [illegible] volume of *al-Futûhât al-makkiyya* by Ibn 'Arabi. [illegible] [illegible] so enraged that since then I abandoned the book for ever . . . My father used [illegible] prohibit the reading of *al-Futûhât* and *al-Fusûs* by Ibn 'Arabi. Yet, at the [illegible] time, he ordered me to hold [illegible] good opinion of al-Shaykh al-Akbar [illegible] to regard him [illegible] the greatest *wali* . . . He used [illegible] say [illegible] [illegible] books contain the truths that could be comprehended only by those people who had reached the highest degree of knowledge. As for beginners, these books may be harmful for them . . .' 'Aydarus b. 'Umar al-Habshi. *'Iqd al-yawâqit al-jawhariyya*, Cairo, 1317, 1, p. 9. For the father's biography, [illegible] Salih al-Hamid al-'Alawi, *Târikh Hadramawt*, Jiddah, 1968, 2, pp. 757–66. Another account of [illegible] attitude towards [illegible] 'Arabi is to be found in Shaykh b.Muhammad al-Jufri (or sometimes al-Jifri), *Kanz al-barâkîn al-kasbiyya*. Hyderabad, 1281/1864, pp. 80–1.
34. [illegible] [illegible] al-'Imad, *Shadharât*, pp. 5, 191–2; Hajjaj, *Mawâqif*, pp. 126–38.
35. Al-Suyuti, *Tanbîh*, 47a–b.
36. Al-Dhahabi, *Mîzân*, p. 108; Ibn Hajar, *Lisân*, p. 312.
37. Al-Ahdal, *Mukhtasar*, [illegible].
38. The case of [illegible] 'Abd al-Salam is discussed in detail in al-Suyuti's *Tanbîh*. For an objective [illegible] by the modern scholar, see Addas, *La quête*, [illegible] 297–9.
39. Ibn Hajar's reading is *akfar al-fikr*, but I prefer *akfar al-kufr* given by al-[illegible] editor.
40. Al-Dhahabi, *Mîzân*, p. 109; Ibn Hajar, *Lisân*, p. 312.
41. They usually share the [illegible] notion, which [illegible] succinctly expressed [illegible] [illegible] *kayfa*, i.e. 'without asking how'.
42. Morris, *Ibn 'Arabi*, 1, p. 540.
43. This central principle of Ibn 'Arabi's epistemology is discussed in Sells, *The Garden*, pp. 301–6, 308–15.
44. As [illegible] Yemeni opponent of Ibn 'Arabi's thought put it: 'By God, [illegible] existence of *al-Fusûs* among [illegible] people [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] injustice to Islam': Ibn al-Ahdal, *Mukhtasar*, 2a.
45. Al-Ahdal, *Mukhtasar*, 30b.

46. Brockelmann, *Geschichte*, pp. 2, 190–1. For [illegible] his life [illegible] thought, see Abu Zayd, *Ismâ'îl*.
47. Al-Habshi, *Al-Fuqahâ'*, p. 148.
48. Al-Habshi, *Al-Fuqahâ'*, p. 60. Zaydi position *vis-à-vis* Ibn 'Arabi in particular and Sufism [illegible] general [illegible] almost invariably hostile. The [illegible] of the Zaydi [illegible] severely persecuted towards the end of the eighth/fourteenth century under the *imâm* Salah al-din Muhammad b. 'Ali (773–93/1371–90) and later in the [illegible] of the tenth/eleventh century during the reign of the *imâm* Sharaf al-din. The [illegible] politics has been pursued by [illegible] latter's [illegible] until recently; al-Habshi, *Al-Fuqahâ'*, pp. 53–60.
49. Al-Habshi, *Al-Fuqahâ'*, p. [illegible]
50. Its founder *imâm* al-Qasim b. Muhammad ruled from 1006/1597 to 1029/1619.
51. Al-Maqbali, *Al-'Alam*, p. 381. A similar story is told by Ibn al-Amir (d. 1182/1768) a Yemeni poet, who said that he had used the same method to cure his diarrhoea, though this time *Al-Insân al-kâmil* by 'Abd al-Karim al-Jili (d. 832/1428) had [illegible] burnt; (for this remarkable interpreter of Ibn 'Arabi's teaching, [illegible] Morris, *Ibn 'Arabi*, 3, pp. 108–10); al-Habshi, *Al-Fuqahâ'*, p. 61.
52. [illegible] Iyas, [illegible] *Chronik*, pp. 197–8.
53. For al-Biqa'i, [illegible] Brockelmann, *Geschichte* (Suppl.), 2, pp. 177–8; al-Sakhawi, *Al-Daw'*, 1, p. 101. [illegible] al-'Imad, *Shadharât*, 7, pp. 339–40. For [illegible] struggle against Ibn 'Arabi and [illegible] al-Farid, see al-Wakil, *Masra'*; Safi, *Al-Adab*, [illegible] 103–7; al-Habshi, *Al-Fuqahâ'*, pp. 93–4; Hajjaj, *Mawâqif*, pp. 126–38.
54. [illegible] al-'Imad, *Shadharât*, 7, p. 340.
55. Safi, *Al-Adab*, p. 104.
56. Al-Sakhawi, *Al-Daw'*, 5, p. 111.
57. For the political, economic and social history of Yemen under the Rasulids, see *A Chronicle of the Rasûlid Dynasty of Yemen*, ed., [illegible] and indices by Hikoichi Yajima, Tokyo, 1976; G.R. Smith, *The Ayyûbids and Early* [illegible] *in the Yemen*, Part 1. London, 1974; Part 2, London, 1978; Muhammad 'Abd al-'Al, [illegible] *wa-banû Tâhir*, Cairo [illegible]
58. Al-Habshi, *Al-Fuqahâ'*, pp. 92–4. Thus Muhammad al-Muzjaji (d. 829/1425), [illegible] rich [illegible] of Zabid, who was [illegible] Ibn 'Arabi's most ardent followers (al-Sakhawi, *Al-Daw'*, 11, pp. 37–8; Abu 'l-'Abbas Ahmad al-Sharji, *Tabaqât al-khawâss*, Cairo, 1321 AH, pp. 151–2 reported that Sultan al-Nasir (d. 827/1424) spared neither efforts nor [illegible] in order to obtain Ibn 'Arabi's autographs for his library. He personally studied different copies of the [illegible] trying [illegible] establish the original reading of the text; al-Habshi, *Al-Fuqahâ'*, pp. 81–2.
59. Al-Qari, *Manâqib*, p. [illegible]
60. Ahmad b. Abi Bakr al-Raddad (b. 821/1418) was a disciple of Isma'il b. Ibrahim al-Jabarti (d. 806/1403), the leader of [illegible] school of Ibn 'Arabi in Yemen, who appointed al-Raddad his [illegible] It is noteworthy that al-Jabarti [illegible] [illegible] of al-Jili, who died in [illegible] (H. Ritter, 'Abd al-Karim al-Jili – *EI*, NE, 1, p. 71; al-Habshi, *Al-Fuqahâ'*, p. 131). For al-Raddad's life [illegible] work, [illegible] Brockelmann, *Geschichte*, 2, p. 242; al-Sakhawi, *Al-Daw'*, 7, p. [illegible] 1, p. 260; al-Sharji, *Tabaqât*, pp. 30–2. For al-Jabarti [illegible] also al-Sharji, *Tabaqât*, pp. 38–40, where his conflict with the anti-Sufi opposition is ignored. The details of this [illegible] [illegible] be found in Ibn al-Ahdal, *Kashf*, pp. 214–22.

61. Ibn al-Ahdal, *Kashf*, p. 221.
62. See, for example, [illegible] al-Ahdal, *Kashf*, pp. 221–2.
63. Al-Habshi, *Al-Fuqahā'*, pp. 134–40; Abu Zayd, *Ismā'īl*, pp. 21–23, 32; Taha Ahmad Abu Zayd, [illegible] contemporary Yemeni researcher, suggests his [illegible] version of Ibn al-Muqri's behaviour which is less detrimental [illegible] [illegible] scholar's reputation but which does [illegible] seem convincing [illegible] us.
64. For example, [illegible] Ibn al-'Imad, *Shadharāt*, 5, p. 192.
65. Al-Ahdal, *Kashf*, pp. 221–2; Abu Zayd, *Ismā'īl*, 22, pp. 194.
66. For al-Fayruzabadi, [illegible] H. Fleisch, Al-Firuzabadi, *EI*, NE, p. 927; for his [illegible] in [illegible] conflict [illegible] Ibn 'Arabi in Yemen, [illegible] al-Habshi, *Al-Fuqahā'*, pp. 130–1.
67. Al-Sakhawi, *Al-Daw'*, 10, pp. 84–5; Ibn al-'Imad, *Shadharāt*, 5, p. 194.
68. [illegible] Addas, *La quête*, pp. 295–7, 333. To the stories analysed by C. Addas, one may [illegible] the anecdote which describes Ibn 'Arabi's meeting with 'Umar al-Suhrawardi (d. 632/1234), whose devotion and orthodoxy was above suspicion in the Sunni milieu. The implication of al-Suhrawardi's high evaluation of the Shaykh's knowledge is [illegible] evident to [illegible] [illegible] in detail. The story is [illegible] tioned by al-Maqqari, *Nafh*, p. 571; Ibn al-'Imad, *Shadharāt*, 5, pp. 193–4 and [illegible] other biographers.
69. Al-Sakhawi, *Al-Daw'*, 10, p. 85.
70. Al-Ahdal, *Kashf*, p. 222; al-Habshi, *Al-Fuqahā'*, p. 150–4; Abu Zayd, *Ismā'īl*, p. 194.
71. The reconstruction of the Shaykh's image through his own writings [illegible] carried [illegible] by R.W.J. Austin in *Sufis of Andalusia*, London, 1971, [illegible] Claude Addas in *La quête*.
72. See Ibn 'Arabi, *Fusūs*, pp. 225–6; cf. Austin, *Bezels*, pp. 282–3.
73. See [illegible] 'Arabi, *Fusūs*, p. 29; Austin, *Bezels*, pp. 62–3. This predisposition (which [illegible] sometimes identical with broadmindedness and free-thinking [illegible] sometimes with not so laudable qualities [illegible] licence and anomic behaviour), or, [illegible] the contrary, lack of it (which also does [illegible] always mean narrowmindedness and dogmatism) [illegible] determined one of those numerous divisions [illegible] are characteristic of the intellectual [illegible] of the Muslim community.
74. Cf. Rosenthal, *Ibn 'Arabi*, p. 35.
75. For these allegations see Ibn al-Ahdal, *Kashf*, pp. 220–1; Abu Zayd, *Ismā'īl*, pp. 194–201, 208–10.
76. [illegible] al-Ahdal, *Kashf*, p. 221.
77. Morris mentions several deep [illegible] original interpretations of Ibn 'Arabi's thought, e.g. by 'Abd al-Karim al-Jili, Awhad al-din al-Balyani, 'Abd al-Qadir al-Jaza'iri, etc.

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Ibn 'Arabi in Print

MARTIN NOTCUTT

INTRODUCTION

The Abrahamic religions, by which I mean Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, participate in an extended metaphor of book, pen, name, breath, tongue, word, Qur'an (recitation), hearing, and more.

No doubt each of the religions characteristically emphasizes some parts of this metaphor, or emphasizes one aspect of it at one time, and looks towards another part ▬ another time.

Certainly all these images find their place in the work of Muhyiddin Ibn 'Arabi, for whom they are realities, or rather, images of the one reality. Perhaps this is one of the reasons why his work is of particular importance today, in that it can mediate between any specializations of these metaphors which have come about, enclosing their peoples.

He tells us about the first time he discovered that there were books on this subject. In the *Rûh al-Quds*, translated by ▬ Austin ▬ *The Sufis of Andalusia* (London, 1971), Ibn 'Arabi refers to a meeting with Abu Ya'qub Yusuf al-Kumi:

> Another experience I ▬ with this Shaykh is worthy of mention. Firstly, ▬ ▬ be explained that I had not at that time seen the *Epistle* of al-Qushayri or any other master, being quite unaware that any of our Way had written anything . . . One day the Shaykh mounted his horse and bade ▬ ▬ one of my companions follow him to Almonteber, ▬ mountain about three miles distant from Seville. Accordingly, when the city gate had been opened in the morning, I ▬ out with my companion who had with him a ▬ of al-Qushayri's *Epistle*. We climbed the mountain and found the Shaykh ▬ ▬ top and his ▬ holding his horse. Then we entered the mosque ▬ the top of ▬ mountain and performed ▬ ritual prayer. When we ▬ finished he turned his ▬ on the *mihrab* and gave ▬ the *Epistle*, telling ▬ ▬ read from it. My ▬ of him was so great that I could ▬ put ▬ words together and the book ▬ from my hands. Then ▬ told my companion ▬ read ▬ and expounded from what was read until it was time for the ▬ afternoon prayer which ▬ performed.

Here ▬ have another resonant image, concordant with the imagery we referred to earlier: the book was placed in his hands and he was told to read. Later, in connection with the *Fusûs al-Hikam*, he says ▬ the beginning of that book (from the Bursevi translation of, and commentary on, rendered into English by Bulent Rauf with the help of R. Brass and H. Tollemache, Oxford, 1986, Vol. 1, pp. 75–81):

[redacted] I [redacted] the Envoy (S.A.) in [redacted] dream of [redacted] of good [redacted] (*mubashshirah*) in the last [redacted] of the month of Muharrem in [redacted] [redacted] 627 [redacted] [redacted] city of Damascus, and in his (S.A.) hand was a book and he said [redacted] me: 'This is the book of the *Fusûs al-Hikam*. Take it and bring it out to the people who will benefit by it.'

And I said I heard and obeyed God the High and His Envoy and the people of order (people who [redacted] masters of command) from among us, [redacted] I [redacted] ordered. I verified the desire (*amniyah*) and purified the intention, [redacted] [redacted] [redacted] purpose [redacted] the *himmah* to expose [redacted] [redacted] [redacted] it [redacted] [redacted] to [redacted] by [redacted] Envoy (S.A.) himself, without increase [redacted] decrease.

And he prayed to God that he should [redacted] the interpreter (of what [redacted] inspired in him), and [redacted] in any way the false arbiter.

This catches up [redacted] many themes which [redacted] characteristic of Ibn 'Arabi's writings, but what I particularly wish to draw attention to is that he regarded [redacted] [redacted] expressions of truth, of which [redacted] [redacted] not [redacted] author.

OBJECT OF THIS PAPER

What is proposed is [redacted] review of some aspects of the body of printed work which includes books by Ibn 'Arabi, and books about him.

I must [redacted] at this point that in what follows I am an amateur, [redacted] what I say here is offered without pretension, and in the hope that it may nonetheless be of service in beginning to bring order to an [redacted] of study which has so far received little attention.

THE EARLY PRINTED WORKS

For [redacted] than 600 [redacted] the works of Ibn 'Arabi were circulated exclusively in manuscript form. When Dr Osman Yahya conducted his research for the *Histoire* [redacted] *Classification de l'Oeuvre d'Ibn 'Arabi* (Paris, 1964), [redacted] found nearly 3,000, covering some 550 works.

The first work by Ibn 'Arabi which [redacted] know to have been printed [redacted] produced at Bulaq in 1252 of the Hejira – 1837 [redacted] This was in itself [redacted] isolated event, and we have to wait almost another twenty years until 1271 (1855) to see the beginning of sustained series of publications of works by the Shaykh. However, before that there may have [redacted] two, or twenty copies of the work in manuscript. Through the production of the book in print there were, [redacted] [redacted] stroke, 500 copies. The effect [redacted] have been tremendous.

To try and get [redacted] perspective, to understand how Ibn 'Arabi's works fit

into the history of Arabic-character printing, let [illegible] try and recall the main facts:

Book printing came late to the Muslim world; that is, there was [illegible] long [illegible] between the invention of the printing process, and [illegible] the appearance of movable Arabic-character type, and the time when these [illegible] really put [illegible] use in Muslim countries.

There [illegible] instances of paper money printed with both Chinese [illegible] Arabic texts from Persia [illegible] the end of the 13th Century; and after the commercial success of Gutenberg's press using movable type for [illegible] first time in the 1440s, printing presses [illegible] to be found in the cities in the Ottoman Empire – [illegible] Istanbul by 1488, Salonika in 1513, Fez in 1516 [illegible] 1521, Cairo in 1557, and so on. [illegible] these activities [illegible] [illegible] often the preserve of the non-Muslim minorities – the Jews, Greeks, Armenians, and other Christians. As far as [illegible] know, Arabic movable type [illegible] first used in Italy (Fano) in 1514 some 70 years after Gutenberg, spreading quickly to Genoa (1516), London (1524), Paris, Rome and Heidelberg. [illegible] there [illegible] no printing for the Muslim world in the Muslim countries.

The difficulty, it seems, [illegible] from the objection of certain of the *'ulamâ'* to the [illegible] of printing for Arab-character works, especially those dealing with Islamic subjects. And the real beginning of Arabic presses in the Ottoman Empire came about only with the lifting of the official ban on the operation of presses by and for Muslims. This happened in Istanbul in 1727, during the expansive Tulip period under Sultan Ahmed III, under the influence of the Grand Vezir Ibrahim Pasha.

It [illegible] some ten years earlier that the Ottoman Empire first began [illegible] send ambassadors abroad, to establish regular contact with the West, and under instruction to report on the military power, the conditions of society, and scientific advances of the countries to which they [illegible] despatched. It [illegible] with the encouragement of someone who had been [illegible] [illegible] Paris that Ibrahim Muteferrika (1674–1754) submitted to the Sublime Porte in 1726 [illegible] plan for the establishment of [illegible] Arabic press. [illegible] stressed the value of cheap printed books in the reviving of learning among Muslims.

With the help of the Grand Vezir, Ibrahim Pasha, the Shaykh al-Islam Abdullah Effendi was persuaded to issue in 1727 (nearly three centuries after Gutenberg) [illegible] *fatwa* allowing the printing of works in Arabic scripts, [illegible] condition that neither the Qur'an nor the religious literature of Islam would be printed.

Ibn Muteferrika's press was established in [illegible] [illegible] house, [illegible] [illegible] first made use of the facilities of local printers, later importing materials from Europe. The first work to be published [illegible] a dictionary, and the press produced a total of [illegible] works between 1729 and 1742. Eleven of these concerned history and geography, three on useful sciences, [illegible] two [illegible] language.

Although the Sultan continued to support the work of the press after conservative reaction [illegible] in 1730, [illegible] the end the opposition of the *'ulamâ'*, the scribes, and the Janissary corps, [illegible] of whom for different reasons [illegible] threatened by [illegible] process, succeeded in ending the work of the press. After the death of Ibrahim Muteferrika in 1745 it [illegible] into disuse until 1782, when it was recommissioned by the [illegible] in [illegible] era of reform and modernization.

[illegible] used for publishing such things [illegible] the official chronicles, but this extended to translations of textbooks, and [illegible] Arabic and Turkish linguistic and [illegible] religious works. The earlier objections to this no longer seemed [illegible] hold weight. This finally was the beginning of printing on [illegible] continuous basis, and other presses were [illegible] up in Istanbul and beyond: in Bulaq in 1822, Baghdad 1830, etc.

What we can draw from this is that printing [illegible] introduced into the Muslim world primarily by those who wanted to encourage the adoption of 'modern' military methods and industrial technology.

This was also true of the establishment of the press [illegible] Bulaq in 1821, which was part of the programme of reforms instituted under the rule of Muhammed Ali (1805–48), through which he transformed Egypt from [illegible] province of the Ottoman Empire into [illegible] effectively independent power. Nonetheless, it [illegible] in Egypt that the works of Ibn 'Arabi first began to appear in print, and where [illegible] of the early works were printed.

Cheng-Hsiang Hsu, in his unpublished thesis (Edinburgh) *The first thirty years of Arabic printing in Egypt* has shown that this press was responsible for [illegible] total of 526 out of the 570 publications which are known to have appeared in Egypt between 1822 and 1851 (1238–67), in other words, the [illegible] majority. About half of these [illegible] in Turkish, and half in Arabic.

From about 1832 onwards the press began to undertake work for individuals on commercial lines, [illegible] that by 1251/1835–6 it was publishing [illegible] [illegible] eight books per year on this basis. Altogether the press produced almost eighty books [illegible] religious subjects during the first thirty years, and it is likely that most of these [illegible] privately sponsored.

It is thus that [illegible] come to the first work by Ibn 'Arabi which [illegible] know of in print. This is the *Fusûs al-Hikam*, published with the commentary in Turkish. It [illegible] [illegible] substantial work of [illegible] [illegible] printed [illegible] high quality Italian paper. It appears that 507 copies were printed.

None of the copies which I have [illegible] have [illegible] title page, and no indication is given [illegible] [illegible] who might have arranged and paid for the publication of [illegible] work: the [illegible] [illegible] the end of the book simply informs us that the book was printed by the printing house [illegible] Bulaq, giving the date of its completion. Everything points to its having been commissioned by [illegible] private person [illegible] group who valued the work highly. It was republished in Istanbul in 1290/1873 in [illegible] two-volume edition.

The next work to appear in print [illegible] actually produced in Leipzig, when in 1845 Gustav Flugel published the text of the *Kitab al-istilâhât al-sûfiyya* as an appendix to his edition of the *Ta'rifat* of Jurjani. This was, however, an isolated incident, and [illegible] have [illegible] wait until the beginning of the twentieth century (of the Christian era) until there [illegible] signs of sustained interest in this [illegible] in Europe.

From the publication of the *Fusûs* in 1252/1837 there is [illegible] of eighteen years until the appearance of the *Dîwân al-Akbar*, printed [illegible] Bulaq in 1271/1855.

Like the volume which preceded it, the *Dîwân* is [illegible] large volume, and contains 478 pages. It is printed [illegible] the best paper, in type based on the Nasta'liq script popular in Persia for books of poetry. The borders of the pages are created by using printers' flowers, with particular effect on the first and last pages.

At the end it has [illegible] in Ottoman Turkish, and the bibliographical information is more extensive and more formal, from which [illegible] gather that it printed under the protection of the Khedive Said Pasha, supervised by Ali Effendi Jawdah, and corrected and amended by Muhammed Ibn Isma'il Shehab-ad-din.

We could say that there [illegible] publishing programme under way, for the [illegible] work, which appeared only two or three years later in 1274/1857 [illegible] none other than the first edition of the *Futûhât al-Makkiyya*, the encyclopaedic work by Ibn 'Arabi. According to Michel Chodkiewicz, this edition [illegible] financed by the Emir 'Abd al-Qadir al-Jaza'iri, the Algerian leader who was exiled to Damascus by the French from 1857 until his death in 1300/1883. He suggests, in his introduction to his translation of portions of the *Kitab al-Mawâqif* of 'Abd al-Qadir, that his influence may also have been effective in stimulating the production of other works.

I have not been able to inspect [illegible] copy of this edition, but like later editions it comprised four volumes, [illegible] enormous undertaking [illegible] any time, which would have taken at least three years to prepare.

It is at this point that works begin to appear from other sources, in particular Istanbul, so this is an opportunity to take [illegible] longer view.

I have drawn up a list of the works which [illegible] published in Arabic [illegible] Turkish between 1252/1837 and 1338/1919, in the order in which they appeared. This produces a total of fifty editions of twenty-five different works. Works which [illegible] known to have been incorrectly attributed to Ibn 'Arabi have been retained in this list [illegible] the grounds that the publishers thought they were publishing books by the Shaykh. If [illegible] eliminate these, however, we take away eight or nine editions of three or four works.

The first thing that becomes clear is that during this period of eighty years, the centre of publishing in this field [illegible] Egypt – which was the [illegible] of a total of twenty-eight editions.

These included:
- three editions of the [illegible] *al-Makkiyya*,
- three editions of the [illegible] *al-Abrâr*,
- two editions of the *Fusûs al-Hikam* with the commentary of Al-Qashani,
- two editions of the *Tafsîr al-Qur'an* (a commentary on the Qur'an wrongly attributed to Ibn 'Arabi),
- two editions of the *Shajarat al-Kawn*,

and single editions of some other well-known works of the Shaykh, such [illegible]
- the [illegible] *al-Quds* (which was later translated both by Miguel Asin Palacios [illegible] Dr Austin),
- [illegible] *Kitâb Kunh* (an 'introductory' work which [illegible] been translated into Turkish, Spanish, French and English),
- the *Istilâhât al-Sûfiyya*, [illegible] series of definitions of technical [illegible] used in Sufism, also found [illegible] the *Futûhât al-Makkiyya*,
- and the *'Anqâ' Mughrib*, [illegible] work which is concerned the station of the Seal of the Saints.

Some of these, such [illegible] *Shajarat al-Kawn*, the *Kitâb Kunh*, and the *'Anqâ' Mughrib*, have continued to be available from small Egyptian printing houses through the 1970s and 1980s.

The first work to be printed in Istanbul [illegible] apparently *Al-Salât al-Faydiyyah*, [illegible] prayer dedicated to the memory of the Prophet, which [illegible] published in 1273/1856. This was followed by [illegible] edition of the *Fusûs al-Hikam* in 1287/1870.

Among the sixteen books published in Istanbul during the period under consideration there were, altogether:
- four editions of the *Fusûs*,
- two books of prayers,
- two editions of the *Shajarat al-Kawn*,
- a translation of the [illegible] *Kunh*,
- [illegible] editions and a translation of the *Tuhfat al-safara* (a work whose attribution to [illegible] 'Arabi is doubtful),
- and a reprinting of the *Istilâhât al-Sûfiyya*.

Not only [illegible] fewer books produced in Istanbul [illegible] in Cairo, but publication of works by Ibn 'Arabi [illegible] to have dried up there in 1321/1903. It is only in [illegible] times that it [illegible] really begun [illegible] revive.

From 1300/1882 we also have the appearance of [illegible] handful of works from the Indian sub-continent:
- two editions of the *Fusûs al-Hikam*, in this [illegible] with a commentary by Dawud al-Qaysari,
- [illegible] undated edition of the *Dîwân*,
- [illegible] two editions of the *Tafsîr al-Qur'an*.

While the *Fusûs al-Hikam* with the commentary of al-Qaysari [illegible] an original publishing venture, the edition of the *Dîwân* was [illegible] fairly crude copy of [illegible] Bulaq edition, from [illegible] 'back-street' printer, [illegible] possible by the use of lithography. Lithography [illegible] one of the factors which gave [illegible] huge boost to the printing of Arabic-character works, making it possible for [illegible] large number of small printing houses to [illegible] business. Before that books had been composed of movable type, a very time-consuming and complex task. Early lithography [illegible] able to employ the skills of traditional scribes, [illegible] thus eased the transition to the modern [illegible] In this case, it was real lithography, that is, writing [illegible] stone, mirror fashion. Later of course it became photo-lithography, where the original [illegible] copied mechanically. We have [illegible] edition of the *Dîwân* produced in Lebanon by this method in the 1970s, which is [illegible] [illegible] reproduction of the Bulaq edition.

We started out with productions of the press [illegible] Bulaq, before stopping to consider the whole output of works in this field up [illegible] the end of the First World War. Altogether four works by Ibn 'Arabi emanated from Bulaq. We have mentioned three of them - the *Fusûs al-Hikam*, the *Dîwân*, the *Futûhât al-Makkiyya*. The fourth [illegible] the first edition of the *Shajarat al-Kawn*. Again, this was [illegible] handsomely produced book, of large format and on good paper, printed in 1292/1875. We are informed that the book [illegible] produced [illegible] the expense of the publisher, [illegible] sign that by this time the works of Ibn 'Arabi had made the transition from being produced only [illegible] sponsored works, to being published [illegible] [illegible] commercial basis.

Nor were they always published solely [illegible] the grounds of their value [illegible] spiritual works. Faris al-Shidyaq seems to have included the short work [illegible] *Al-Amr al-Muhkam* in [illegible] anthology of works by Arabic authors as part of his campaign to revive interest in classical language and literature.

However, the very real interest taken by individuals in the books of Ibn 'Arabi has [illegible] that [illegible] this day the process of publishing them has often been speeded by private efforts. We learn from the third edition of the *Futûhât al-Makkiyya*, which appeared in 1329/1911, that this was printed [illegible] the expense of Al-Hajj Fada Muhammed al-Kashmiri and his partners.

This edition of the *Futûhât al-Makkiyya* [illegible] produced by the printing house of Mustafa al-Halabi, which was established in 1276/1859, and which informs [illegible] that it was renowned for its specialization in printing scientific books and for its particular accuracy. Al-Halabi had also been the printer of an edition of the *Fusûs al-Hikam* which appeared in Cairo in 1321/1903, and [illegible] [illegible] to print many other works by Ibn 'Arabi. Some other printing houses and publishers [illegible] be identified, but I have not yet sufficient information to make [illegible] sensible statement.

This, then, [illegible] to [illegible] report from [illegible] ongoing project: The first [illegible] has been simply [illegible] sort the known works according to the place and date of appearance. I have so far been able to inspect about fifteen of the works from this period, ranging from [illegible] beautifully printed works from Bulaq to very simply produced prayer books. Each of these offers [illegible] varying amount of formal and informal bibliographical information, which, [illegible] it accumulates, and can be interpreted by those with the skill and knowledge, will fill in the picture.

Without being [illegible] precise, [illegible] [illegible] say that during the seventy years since 1919, much of the printing of works by or about Ibn 'Arabi in the Muslim world [illegible] been in the form of reprints of books published earlier, or [illegible] been in the 'international' language of the academic world. To follow the development of this matter, [illegible] should [illegible] [illegible] our attention to Europe.

THE BEGINNINGS OF ACADEMIC STUDIES

Although the first work by the Shaykh to be printed in Europe appeared in 1845, we have to wait until the beginning of the twentieth century to find clear signs of a wider interest in Ibn 'Arabi. Here we find [illegible] cluster of distinguished names:

R.A. Nicholson, who became Professor of Arabic [illegible] Cambridge University, who published the [illegible] and [illegible] English translation of the *Tarjuman al-Ashwaq* in 1911, and extensive [illegible] on Ibn 'Arabi and 'Abd al-Kerim Jili in *Studies in Islamic Mysticism* (1921), also the text, translation of and commentary on the *Mathnawi* of Jalaluddin Rumi (1930).

H.S. Nyberg, the great Swedish orientalist, who edited three short works by Ibn 'Arabi, published by Brill in 1919; and above all, Miguel Asin Palacios, who became Director of the School of Arabic Studies [illegible] Madrid, and editor of *Al-Andalus*. He [illegible] the first to concern himself with the life of [illegible] Shaykh, to seek to translate a substantial [illegible] of representative material from [illegible] works, and to propose [illegible] relate [illegible] thought both to medieval and contemporary figures in Europe. [illegible] commitment [illegible] this [illegible] [illegible] wholehearted, and [illegible] debt [illegible] [illegible] is evident in the work of [illegible] scholars such as Ralph Austin and Claude Addas who continued the biographical project begun by Asin Palacios.

[illegible] also [illegible] the effect of making [illegible] 'Arabi's [illegible] very widely known in Europe. His book *La Escatalogia musulmana [illegible] la Divina Comedia* published in Madrid in 1919, attracted many reviews, [illegible] of [illegible] [illegible] striking of which appeared in the *Analecta Bollendiana* (cited in *Islam and the Divine Comedy* by Asin Palacios, London, 1986, p. ix):

> The author of this book is universally known. There is scarcely any example of a work in Oriental philology having attracted so much attention. The audacity of the thesis could not fail to rouse the most lively interest in all who are initiated in the problems of literary history. The analogies shown by the author to exist between the *Divine Comedy* and Islam are so numerous and of such a nature as to be disquieting to the mind of the reader, who is forced to picture to himself the great epic of Christianity enthroned in the world of Muslim mysticism, as if in a mosque that were closed to Islam and consecrated to Christian worship. At all events, there will always remain to the author of this book the honour of having started one of the most memorable debates in the history of universal literature.

In the course of his research, Asin Palacios had found correspondences also between the work of Averroes and St Thomas Aquinas, and between the *Ikhwân as-Safâ'* and other European spirituals, and followed in the footsteps of his teacher, Juan Ribera, who had referred to Ibn 'Arabi in his essay on the *Origins of the Philosophy of Raimundo Lulo* in 1899. But in writing about Dante two years before the celebration of the 600th anniversary of his death, he provoked a sensation. Despite this, the work was not just an essay in correspondences, but a careful analysis of Ibn 'Arabi's eschatology.

Whether or not he was correct in the details of his thesis I do not know, but surely he was correct in his belief in the relatedness and integral unity of the spiritual and intellectual development of this region, beyond apparent differences of creed. Because of the special history of the Peninsular, I should think this was more sharply evident to a Spanish orientalist than to any other European.

It should be remembered also that he was a priest, writing many years before the Second Vatican Council, and that all his books carried the *nihil obstat* of the censor. I believe he went much further in the book *El Islam cristianizado*, which appeared in 1931, for in this book, prefaced with considerations in the light of Catholic theology, he asserted the reality and validity of the spiritual life of the Shaykh.

The book is presented as a study of the doctrine of spirituality of Ibn 'Arabi, following on from the four monographs which he had published between 1925 and 1928. But it also had an extensive essay on the life of the Shaykh, and carried an unprecedented body of translations of his works. Again, there were intellectual fireworks, and in a pioneering work it was carried out without the benefit of the researches effected later by others, but I think it is fair to say that, taken as a whole, in presentation of the life and thought and works of the Shaykh, it has not been equalled, and that there is still much in what he wrote which has not yet been responded to.

Writing in 1925, in the introduction to the first of four monographs which paved the way for *El Islam cristianizado*, he said:

It [redacted] more than twenty years since I conceived the project of publishing a study which brought together the life [redacted] the philosophical system of the [redacted] mystic Muhyiddin Ibn 'Arabi. Although my labours [redacted] interrupted to some extent by other studies, the [redacted] of materials collected during the periods of work which I [redacted] able to dedicate to this theme were certainly considerable, but nonetheless insufficient, by [redacted] long way, for the purpose of achieving the definitive synthesis of which I dreamed in my inexperienced youth. The [redacted] number of Arabic sources, which is indispensable to the exploration of that work, would require [redacted] assiduous [redacted] concentrated collaboration of various specialists over many years. A single one of [redacted] works of Ibn 'Arabi, his *Futûhât*, consists of four volumes in folio, which total some 4,000 [redacted] in [redacted] technical style [redacted] language which is difficult to interpret. (*El Místico Murciano Aben 'Arabi*, Madrid, 1925, p. 5)

There [redacted] themes here which will perhaps strike [redacted] chord with many other students of Ibn 'Arabi. In the introduction to *The Sufi Path of Knowledge* (Albany, NY, 1989, p. xxi), William Chittick says:

> I began this book with the idea of providing [redacted] [redacted] or less comprehensive overview of Ibn al-'Arabi's teachings . . . several months of writing made it clear to [redacted] that I could not possibly provide [redacted] reasonable survey of Ibn 'Arabi's teachings under [redacted] [redacted] . . .

These problems do not just arise because of the physical [redacted] of Ibn 'Arabi's work, [redacted] because of complex historical inter-relationships – they [redacted] inherent in the [redacted] of the subject. Ibn 'Arabi's writings reflect the One, God, Who, although everything in existence is [redacted] expression of His Names, is beyond all name.

Chittick himself quotes (p. xii) a [redacted] of Ibn 'Arabi from the *Futûhât*: 'What [redacted] deposit in every chapter, in relation to what [redacted] have, is but [redacted] drop in the ocean.' As if to demonstrate this, [redacted] [redacted] ninety-chapter section of the *Futûhât*, [redacted] provides in each chapter a list of the related topics which he could have discussed, and these lists alone will fill [redacted] than [redacted] pages of the *Futûhât* in its new edition. [redacted] even if he had written [redacted] [redacted] those topics, it would still have been [redacted] drop in the [redacted]

This is not in any way to negate [redacted] attempts to study and talk about these [redacted] – nothing could [redacted] [redacted] worthwhile – but to look towards the spirit in which [redacted] should approach such enterprises.

Many scholars have pointed [redacted] the enormity of the task of coming to [redacted] with the corpus of work of [redacted] 'Arabi, and [redacted] [redacted] indebted to the service performed by Osman Yahya in his work *Histoire* [redacted] *Classification de l'Oeuvre d'Ibn 'Arabi*. This sifted through the multitude of manuscripts and [redacted] of [redacted] known [redacted] lost and wrongly attributed works, and [redacted] the coordinates for [redacted] subsequent bibliographic study.

As if this were [redacted] sufficient achievement, it is difficult to contemplate just how much is implied in the preparation of the new edition of the

Futûhât, which [illegible] been appearing volume by volume since 1972. I think it is only fitting that in the one case UNESCO (the United Nations Educational [illegible] Scientific organization) should have contributed to the furtherance of his researches, and that in [illegible] second, [illegible] government press should be printing the book.

I will [illegible] try [illegible] [illegible] any [illegible] of the academic contributions to this field, and those who would like to find [illegible] [illegible] review of much of the literature will find it in [illegible] extended article by James Morris, *Ibn 'Arabi and his Interpreters*, which in particular covered the substantial number of books in French.

However I would [illegible] to refer briefly to the remark of Asin Palacios that the study of Ibn 'Arabi would require 'the assiduous and concentrated collaboration of various specialists over many years'.

The project of gathering a group of scholars [illegible] achieved by Sayyed Hossein Nasr at Tehran University and the Imperial Iranian Academy of Philosophy in the 1970s, where people such as Henry Corbin, Toshihiko Izutsu, William Chittick and Peter Lamborn Wilson could work together with Iranian scholars. This group [illegible] dispersed by the onset of the Iranian revolution.

In more recent times, it is Michel Chodkiewicz who has done [illegible] than anyone else to sustain communications between the scholars working together in this field, [illegible] evidenced by the recently published anthology of translations from the *Futûhât* in both French and English.

One should also mention the Muhyiddin Ibn 'Arabi Society, which through its Journal (published since 1982), and its Symposia (held annually since 1984), has provided a meeting place for people with a wide [illegible] of views and reasons for being interested in the Shaykh.

SOME OTHER SOURCES OF WORKS IN PRINT

For some decades the most fertile ground for interest in Ibn 'Arabi [illegible] been in the West. The enquiring reader will still find more works on this subject more readily available in English or French than in Arabic, or Persian [illegible] Turkish, although publishing may be beginning to recover in those languages. Perhaps the social changes in this part of the world have disposed people to become receptive to what he says, just as other social changes in the [illegible] countries made it difficult for him to be heard.

Thus his works have not only been of professional interest to linguists, and [illegible] the level of university study, but in translation [illegible] well [illegible] in the original they have touched [illegible] chord in many people, who have responded not [illegible] arguments about his importance, but to the beauty [illegible] majesty of what [illegible] conveys.

There have been a fair number of works published in the West directly to the meanings expressed by Ibn 'Arabi, without any particular regard to the academic realms of knowledge. These have varied immensely in quality, one could say that the academic works have done well. Distinctions between books offered on this basis may be considered a matter of taste, by which I have in mind developed, spiritual taste (*dhawq*), which is by definition not easy to discuss. For myself I believe that the translations of Bulent Rauf, for example, are sustained at a level not attempted by others.

However, a number of questions seem to arise, which indicate the different attitudes of people involved:

- Can one seriously study Ibn 'Arabi in translation, without learning Arabic?
- Can one pretend to study Ibn 'Arabi without the background of a knowledge of Medieval Arabic thought?
- Can one study Ibn 'Arabi (as an example of Sufism) without a foundation in the practice of the Islamic *sharfah*?
- Can one put any limitation on what is required for the study of Ibn 'Arabi, other than conformity to the meanings which he expresses?

All these questions have their reasons for being, and deserve respect, although the issues involved have sometimes led to vigorous debate. Perhaps we are coming to a time when those who publish in this field will tend to take more account of one another, and will increasingly take into account what can be shared between the different standpoints.

This is not to say that all these standpoints are equal in value, but the distinction between them is not at the level of intellectual argument, where none of them has any particular merit. The real difference lies in what the individuals concerned make of these standpoints, and those who find themselves attracted to that which held the heart of Ibn 'Arabi will be able to listen, will want to listen, to one another when they talk about that.

He was in every way a model of both accuracy and broadness in this, saying (I cannot identify the source) 'I have not described any spiritual station without (either having experienced it myself) or having met someone who has tasted of it.' And this is the word of one whose title is Seal of the Saints, who is one who regards all stations.

The Preface of the *Futûhât al-Makkiyyah*

FRITHIOF RUNDGREN

The volume of which this paper is ■ part is a celebration of the life and times of Ibn 'Arabi. I shall try, here, to make a contribution to ■ knowledge of the inner life of this great man, in ■ sense of his technical way of thinking, so to speak, using as my main source the preface of the *Futûhât*.

The prefaces of important Arabic books are often of great interest ■ us, reflecting in concentrated form the ideological attitude of an author towards the subject he is dealing with. This is the case especially with theological and philosophical works, sometimes also with the so-called *adab*, *belles-lettres*.

Considering carefully an author's choice of terms and expressions in the preface, we ■ able to draw rather ■ conclusions ■ to the trend of opinion he represents. It should, however, not be denied that ■ great number of prefaces can be regarded ■ pieces of empty display, without close connection with the work they introduce, being apparently designed in order to *épater le bourgeois*. Not ■ the preface of ■ 'Arabi's giant work, the *Futûhât al-Makkiyyah*. These Meccan Revelations were composed in stages, and the preface, the *muqaddima*, has been completed by an extensive supplement, a *tatimma*. In addition to this, the work is introduced by ■ *khutba*, ■ sermon, a literary genre which in certain circumstances can function as a preface; this sermon, too, is provided with a supplement.

The main purpose of this paper is to try to detect certain lines of thought in what constitutes the background of Ibn 'Arabi's exposition, ■ background from which the originality of the great Shaykh better stands out. Moreover, ■ will also notice how he has, in his own way, developed a certain kind of thinking to be designated as 'conceptual identification' ■ *analogia*. But, and this should be clearly pointed out, ■ is on the system as forming a whole that everything depends.

Now let us first consider the introductory words of the sermon:

> The praise belongs to God who has created (*awjada*) the things out of non-being and its ■ non-being, and who has entrusted their existence to the observancy of His words, so that ■ shall by this be able to verify the secret of their origin and eternity through ■ eternity, ■ ■ that ■ by this verification ■ understand that of its firm footing [in knowledge] which He ■ informed us of.[1]

These words contain almost the quintessence of the religious philosophy of Ibn 'Arabi. According to him God has certainly created the world, and through a *creatio* [redacted] *nihilo*. In conformity with his philosophy of existence, he uses here the verb *awjada*, 'bring into existence', in [redacted] true philosophical [redacted] instead of the normal word for 'create', namely, *khalaqa*. Thus God [redacted] given existence to the things after their being hidden, in the [redacted] of *kumûn*, [redacted] to speak (possibly in connection with Syriac *ba-kmênâ*, 'in secret').

The doctrine of the *kumûn* [redacted] introduced into the debate by the dialectician an-Nazzam (died in Baghdad about 840), and it implies that God has created everything in one go, so that Adam, for instance, was [redacted] created before his children. There is no 'before' or 'after' here, but only [redacted] manifestation, *zuhûr*, [redacted] [redacted] certain time, in [redacted] certain place. Thus a grain of corn is lying hidden in the earth for some time, but appears later in the shape of [redacted] ear.[2] Although an-Nazzam [redacted] influenced by Stoic thinking, there [redacted] no doubt that his doctrine of *kumûn and zuhûr* is also to be considered [redacted] offshoot from the Aristotelian doctrine of the *wujûd bi-l-qûwa* and the *wujûd bi-l-fi'l* respectively; this is [redacted] result of [redacted] conceptual identification [redacted] *analogia*.

However, it is [redacted] [redacted] of place here to call our attention to Ibn Sina's attempt at finding [redacted] intermediary formula in the scholastic controversy between realists and nominalists, [redacted] controversy that did [redacted] exist only in the West, [redacted] also had its equivalent in the East. This formula [redacted] that [redacted] universals exist in the [redacted] of God before the individuals, but [redacted] the natural things [redacted] their immanent essence, and after the individuals, [redacted] [redacted] abstracting thought. [redacted] [redacted] should observe that [redacted] the pattern 'before – in – after' the member 'in' repre- [redacted] the *mutawassit*, the medium position within [redacted] structural triad, [redacted] old way of thinking, and, as we shall see, by no means unknown to our Shaykh.

Now Ibn 'Arabi calls this [redacted] of *kumûn* instead: *al-wujûd al-'ilmî*, 'the existence in knowledge', which God by [redacted] act of creation transforms into the state of *zuhûr*, here 'actuality', also designated as *wujûd 'aynî*, [redacted] individual existence. Thus, within the *'ilm*, the knowledge of God, the universal exists before, and yet together with, the particular, [redacted] *'ayn thâbita*, that corresponds [redacted] every *mawjûd bi-l-fi'l*. This [redacted] also a polemic against a heresy of which [redacted] used to accuse the philosophers; namely, the opinion [redacted] God only knows the universals but [redacted] [redacted] particulars, [redacted] *juz'iyât*.

[redacted] then continues in the following way:

> He was [redacted] (*zahara*) [redacted] He got power (i.e. [redacted] everything) (*zahara*), and [redacted] (i.e. the secrets) (*azhara*) [redacted] He [redacted] [redacted] far-away (*mâ batana*), but yet He [redacted] (*batana*), [redacted] [redacted] concealed (i.e. the secrets) (*abtana*).[3]

Now, when it is said that God was manifested, this manifestation [illegible] place through [illegible] effulgence (*tajallî*) into everything – this conception being, [illegible] doubt, in [illegible] last resort, [illegible] on the connection established between 'The Good' [illegible] the [illegible] in Plato's Republic, and further developed by Stoics and Neoplatonists. However, here [illegible] [illegible] with [illegible] notions that have played the greatest role within Islamic religious philosophy, namely, *zâhir*, 'visible, outer', [illegible] *bâtin*, 'inner, invisible', constituting quite [illegible] specific conception that [illegible] [illegible] traced back to Plato's doctrine of ideas – for Plato is the father of realism [illegible] the [illegible] of medieval scholasticism. The terms in question give expression to two modes of existence for [illegible] the things in the world, [illegible] world that [illegible] in itself a cosmic order, held together with the aid of cosmic sympathy [illegible] [illegible] sense of Poseidonius.

As for the logic reigning over this cosmos, it should be remembered that with the Greeks formal logic originates in the analysis of language, or, more correctly, in the analysis of speech, *lógos*, and its parts. While in Plato's *Cratylus* the problem [illegible] reference to the relationship obtaining between language and reality, Aristotle [illegible] mainly concerned with the truth or untruth of statements, as well [illegible] with [illegible] classification of possible predicates, the so-called categories. This is the reason why Arabic *kalâm* [illegible] 'speech' and 'dialectics', 'theology', while *mantiq* [illegible] 'speech' and 'logic'. Moreover the Stoics [illegible] advanced the doctrine of the double nature of speech – a doctrine reflected in Arabic national grammar, namely, in the terms *ism*, 'the name', and *musammâ*, 'the denominated', [illegible] well [illegible] in the terms *lafz*, 'outer, directly observable speech', and *ma'nâ*, 'inner, not directly observable speech'; that is, the meaning of the object meant, whereby Plato's idea had, so [illegible] speak, been situated within Man, or, [illegible] be more precise, within his intellect, *'aql*, a loan-translation of *nous*, 'mind', from *néô*, 'spin, twist together'.

This being so, it is, I think, easy to understand that the correlation *lafz* = *ma'nâ* by conceptual identification could give rise to the correlation *zâhir* = the outer reality = *bâtin* = the inner reality, *haqîqa*, as well as to the two kinds of interpretation, namely, *tafsîr*, 'literal exegesis', and *ta'wîl*, 'esoteric exegesis'. Moreover, the whole having priority over the part, it became, according to the monistic thinking, typical also of Ibn 'Arabi, [illegible] exponent of the inner, invisible reality, understood then as the universal. This universal became in turn not only real, but, in fact, also [illegible] real, than its particulars, the manifestations of the real in [illegible] outer, terrestrial reality. Let me point out that Ibn 'Arabi, who also mastered what at his time had long been called *falsafa*, 'philosophy', has by virtue of his deep thinking drawn his own conclusions from the prerequisites now sketched out.

Now, considering the introductory words of the preface proper, the *muqaddima*, we find that Ibn 'Arabi says that [illegible] had sometimes

thought that, at [illegible] front of his book, he should place a section dealing with the tenets, the *'aqâ'id*, confirmed by 'decisive arguments [illegible] evident demonstrations'. However, he has found, he says, that such a section might arouse enmity, *tashghîb*[4] against the type of Sufi he now presents to us in the shape of the *muta'ahhib*, 'he who is ready and seeks something more, exposing himself for the breezes of the generosity with the secrets of being', the *asrâr al-wujûd*.[5] The verb *ta'ahhaba* 'to make oneself ready', namely for [illegible] voyage (*safar*), is here reinterpreted, meaning the preparations for the voyage of the soul, with its stations (*maqâm/monê*) and states (*hâl/stâsis*), originally a Platonic and [illegible] also gnostic motif. Among the preparations required for [illegible] voyage [illegible] find loneliness (*khalwa*) and recollection (*dhikr*)[6] i.e. 'meditation', calling for a clean sweep of intellectual thinking in the usual [illegible] (*fikr*); in [illegible] state of destitution 'the ready one' [illegible] waiting [illegible] the door of God.' For it is then that [illegible] will give him knowledge about himself, about [illegible] divine secrets, and those insights of the Sovereign which [illegible] bestowed [illegible] His [illegible] *Khidr*.[8]

Now, in the supplement [illegible] the preface Ibn 'Arabi comes back [illegible] *al-muta'ahhib*, and this time he tells us why [illegible] wants to prevent 'the ready one' from speculating about the [illegible] of the [illegible] with regard [illegible] theology, the *'ilm al-kalâm*. The reason he adduces is that the [illegible] of the people, in the [illegible] of the masses (*al-'awâmm*), are sound in themselves. Moreover, these [illegible] [illegible] Muslims, although they have [illegible] studied theology or received information about the schools of its adversaries. That this is so depends, [illegible] author says, on the fact that God [illegible] preserved ordinary people in the [illegible] of the soundness they had [illegible] the time of [illegible] creation, which is also the time of natural religion according to Ibn 'Arabi, [illegible] [illegible] par with 'the knowledge of the existence of God', [illegible] manifested in *zâhir al-Qur'an al-mubîn*, and [illegible] understood by [illegible] law-abiding (*mutasharri'*) father or educator, [illegible] long [illegible] he does [illegible] choose [illegible] way of esoteric exegesis, *ta'wîl*.[9]

Then [illegible] adds that the [illegible] of ordinary people [illegible] sound also [illegible] the ground of their having received them from the revealed meaning in The Precious Book, in such a way as is decisive, because tradition, *tawâtur*, [illegible] [illegible] of the ways leading to knowledge. And [illegible] the [illegible]

> For the aim of knowledge is only the decision on 'the known' as [illegible] whether it is in accordance with that which we [already] know, without uncertainty and doubt. Now [illegible] for the Qur'an it is with [illegible] already through the tradition certain [illegible] a [illegible] [illegible] come with it, a person who has maintained that he is an envoy from God, [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] brought that which proves its truth, i.e. this Qur'an, [illegible] that no one can deny it at all. Thus with [illegible] [illegible] is true through tradition that he [illegible] the envoy of God to us, and that he has brought this Qur'an that [illegible] before us today and told us that it is the speech of God. All this is certain through tradition, and the knowledge (*'ilm*) of this is certain, that it is the true announcement and the

> decisive word, the proofs being transmissional (*sam'i*) and rational. And when we give our opinion on something there is no doubt that it is in accordance with this judgement. Now this being such [redacted] have said, the *muta'ahhib*, too, [redacted] take his [redacted] (*'aqida*) from the precious Qur'an which is instead of a rational proof with regard to authority, since [redacted] is the truth which 'no falsehood can approach it, from before or behind it, a revelation from a wise and praised.'[10] Thus this principle (*asl*) being certain, there is no need for the *muta'ahhib* of [redacted] rational proofs, since the decisive proof already exists [redacted] which the sword is hung up, and on which the agreement is secured.[11]

This section recalls in a remarkable way [redacted] traits of Stoic thinking, which is, however, by no [redacted] surprising. For, on the one hand, Sufism has earlier, [redacted] well [redacted] later, been influenced by Christianity, and, on the other, the formulation of Christian dogmas already betrays [redacted] certain influence from Stoicism. Moreover, [redacted] [redacted] philosophical school Stoicism [redacted] well known to the Arabs, who called its members *ashâb ar-Riwâq*, 'those from the *Stod*' (a roofed colonnade), the word *riwâq* being [redacted] Middle Iranian loan-word: *Pahlavi ravâg*, 'a walk, colonnade'; another purely Arabic designation was *ahl al-mazâll*, 'the people of the parasols, the sun-tents'.

Now, as for the author's [redacted] that the religious beliefs of ordinary people are in themselves of a natural soundness, we [redacted] reminded of the fact that to the Stoics [redacted] [redacted] holy, their first ethical principle being [redacted] life in harmony with nature. Thus it is not surprising to find Ibn 'Arabi saying that God has preserved the [redacted] [redacted] *sihhat al-fitra*, 'in a [redacted] of sound nature', which he considers [redacted] be on a par with *al-'ilm bi-wujûd Allah*, a kind of *da'at Elohim*, 'knowledge of God'.

Despite their dialectic materialism, the cosmology of the Stoics was pantheistic and teleologic. With it also hangs together their assertion of natural law, differing from positive law. By virtue of the cosmic, everything-penetrating reason, [redacted] spirit of community reigns between all human beings, and there is no difference between the free man and the slave. The Stoic also speaks of a communion between God and The Wise Man, recalling thus the *tashabbuh*, 'imitation', and the *ittihâd*, 'union' of the Muslims.

An important proof of the truth of the Qur'an Ibn 'Arabi [redacted] thus found in the notion of *tawâtur*, 'transmission', this by influence from Judaism, but also to [redacted] certain extent from the Stoics, namely, because of their interest in the various national religions [redacted] being participants of the primeval [redacted] of [redacted] Golden Age, [redacted] to speak. It appears, likewise, from the preface that the epistemology of Ibn 'Arabi is, although [redacted] directly of course, influenced by Greek thinking. Thus he says: *laysa 'l-gharadu mina 'l-'ilmi [redacted] 'l-qat'u 'alâ 'l-ma'lûmi, annahu [redacted] [redacted] mâ 'alimnâhu*: 'The only aim of knowledge is the decision on "the known",

that it is in accordance with what [redacted] (already) know.'[12] For what the Stoic [redacted] knows is always right. In conformity with their materialistic and yet teleological view of the world, the Stoics have integrated the parts of their elaborate epistemology within the limits of thought (*arkhé*), [redacted] action (*télos*), thereby using mainly two notions, namely, the *tadâkhul al-jismayn fî makân wâhid*, 'the mutual penetration of two entities in [redacted] place' (*krasis di' hólôn*), and the paradoxes of Zeno.

In my [redacted] lecture to the Muhyiddin Ibn 'Arabi Society I quoted the [redacted] *âkhiru 't-tafakkuri awwalu 'l-'amali*: 'The end of the thinking is the beginning of the action', and an-Nazzam might here also have added: 'The beginning of the action is the end of the thinking.' For in the [redacted] way [redacted] maintained, on the [redacted] hand, that the bodies are accidents, and, on the other, that the accidents [redacted] bodies, the substance (*jawhar*) being thus composed of united accidents. In the last resort this trait of reversibility is founded in the Stoic theory of cosmic cyclicality. However, in applying this grandiose theory on natural phenomena one took refuge [redacted] linguistic logic, [redacted] logic of words, words as images, [redacted] signs for something else, other than themselves. Thus such Stoic [redacted] as *pneuma*, 'spirit', and *tónos*, 'tension', are used in manifold connections, often with the help of *tò méson*, 'the medium'. A fairly interesting example is an-Nazzam's method of coping with the antithesis *sukûn*, 'rest'/*haraka*, 'motion'. Having stated that [redacted] the actions of the Muslims are movements and nothing else, he succeeds in finding [redacted] medium between 'rest' and 'motion', interpreting these notions [redacted] the pattern of the Greek *moné*, 'abiding', and *kínesis*, 'motion' (the opposite of which is *stásis*, 'standing still') respectively. [redacted] found the connecting link in the notion of *i'timâd*, 'the leaning, the propping oneself, the staying' (translation of Syriac *semak*, '*consistere*'). Thus he defined the *sukûn* as *harakatu 'timâdin*, 'the movement of standing still, staying', using *haraka* here in the sense of *mabda'u taghayyurin mâ*, 'the beginning of a change of some sort': the end of the rest is the beginning of the motion, and the beginning of the motion is the end of the rest, namely, 'tension', the *kínesis toniké* of the Stoics.

Now [redacted] also observe the triad, *'ilm – 'âlim – ma'lûm*: 'knowledge' – 'knowing' – 'known', recalling *inter alia* the triad, *gnôsis – tò gignôskon – tò gignôskómenon*, in Plato's *Cratylus*, [redacted] B. It is here, with Ibn 'Arabi, something absolute, deterministic in his way of reasoning, in his way of reaching what he considered [redacted] be the truth. And it is precisely this mechanical trait that constitutes the [redacted] important indication of the hermeneutic horizon he has, consciously or unconsciously, made his [redacted]

Let [redacted] take the following example: *idhâ hakamnâ [redacted] amrin mâ, fa lâ shakka fîhi, annahu 'ala dhâlika 'l-hukmi*: 'And when we have given [redacted] opinion on a thing there is [redacted] doubt of its being in accordance with this

judgement.'[13] Here he stands in ■ Stoic tradition. Only God is 'wise', *hakîm*, ■ is true, but according to Stoic tradition [redacted] sometimes delegates parts, *fusûs*, of his wisdom, *hikma*, to selected [redacted] who then are regarded as messengers (*dngeloi*) [redacted] out by God. However, through hard training, ordinary men also can try to reach the perfection *par excellence*; namely, the faculty of being [redacted] to give the right judgement, *hukm*, in the ups [redacted] downs of life. It is in the light of this Stoic [redacted] that [redacted] have to look upon the use of the verb *hakama* here.

With their cosmopolitan attitude, including also the universal city-[redacted] [redacted] copied on the pattern of the terrestrial city-state, the Stoics could also accept non-Hellenistic messengers of wisdom [redacted] out by God. Such views [redacted] been taken [redacted] by the Arabs. In the introduction [redacted] *al-Adab al-Kabîr*, Ibn al-Muqaffa' (died 759) [redacted] described ■ human [redacted] of remote times, ■ [redacted] that in every respect [redacted] better endowed, physically [redacted] mentally, than the later generations. This [redacted] had collected all its experience and knowledge in books in order [redacted] make this heritage known to coming generations. Thus the best these can do, says the author, is [redacted] imitate such *hikam al-awwalîn* in life (*sîra*) and letters (*'ilm*), for in this way they will be such [redacted] if they had actually talked with them and [redacted] to them. The section ends:

> O thou who strives for education (*adab*), do learn to know the principles (*usûl*) and their ends (*fusûl*) [i.e. *arkhé* and *télos*] for many ■ [redacted] aims [redacted] the ends while letting the principles get lost, so that their 'grasping' (*darak*) does [redacted] become a [redacted] grasping. But those who have acquired the principles are [redacted] with them, so that they have no need of the ends. However, if they hit the end after having acquired the principle, this is still better.[14]

From Syriac [redacted] based on Neoplatonic commentaries [redacted] Aristotle, [redacted] see that the Stoics had the habit of illustrating this with the building of a house: looking only to the end you will begin with the roof; having acquired the principle, you will begin with the foundations.

Now Ibn al-Muqaffa' also maintains that it is this Great Generation that has given rise to the subdivision of knowledge in *sunûf*, *aqsâm*, and *ajzâ'*, and this is a subject that has very often been dealt with in [redacted] literature before Ibn 'Arabi, who now, in conformity with his bold and yet logical approach, speaks of the *marâtib al-'ulûm*, 'the ranks of knowledge', an expression used also by al-Farabi. With [redacted] 'Arabi these classes are: the knowledge of the intellect; the knowledge of the spiritual states; and the knowledge of the secrets. Of these ranks of knowledge he says:

> And as regards the sciences of the spiritual states, these are to be found between the knowledge of the secrets and the knowledge of the intelligences. Now it is most often in the knowledge of the spiritual states that the people of experience believe, this knowledge being closer [redacted] the knowledge of the secrets than to the knowledge

> of the speculative intellect, but [illegible] to the kind [illegible] constitutes the aprioristic (*darûrî*) speculative knowledge; yes, it is [illegible] with this. However, since intelligences cannot attain it (i.e. the knowledge of [illegible] secrets) except through a [illegible] made by him who knows it from, for instance, [illegible] prophet or a saint, it is by that separated from the aprioristic intellectual knowledge. But the knowledge of the spiritual [illegible] is aprioristic with those who have experienced it.[15]

This is a highly interesting and clever approach: [illegible] place the *darûra*, 'necessity', of philosophy (in the sense of *falsafa*) on an equal footing with the *mushâhada*, 'the beholding, autoptic testimony of the Sufi'. What is the connecting link between these two sources of knowledge?

In the section on logic in his book *Maqâsid al-falâsifa*, ('The Aims of the Philosophers'), al-Ghazali says of the two Stoic notions *tasawwur*, 'representation', and *tasdîq*, 'assent' (namely, to the *sidq*, 'truth', of [illegible] representation), that each [illegible] of them is subdivided into 'that which is *a priori* (*awwalan*) understood without investigation and reflection', and 'that which [illegible] be established without reflection."[16] He continues:

> As for that which is represented to us without investigation, it is like 'existence', 'thing', [illegible] the like, [illegible] [illegible] regards that which [illegible] through investigation, it is here like the insight into the essence of the spirit, the angel, the *jinn*, [illegible] well [illegible] the insight into the representation of the essence of the hidden things. As far as the aprioristic confirmation of the known (*ma'lûm*) is concerned, [illegible] is like the judgement (*hukm*) that two is more than one, and that things which are like [illegible] single thing [illegible] like [illegible] other.[17]

To Aristotle and the medieval scholastics knowledge [illegible] *priori* appeared [illegible] opposite to knowledge [illegible] *posteriori*, in the sense that the former had reference to knowledge founded on cause, while the latter [illegible] regarded [illegible] based on consequence [illegible] effect. Now, [illegible] we heard, Ibn 'Arabi [illegible] that it is mostly the people of experience, the *ahl at-tajârib*, who believe in the *'ilm al-ahwâl*, the knowledge of the spiritual states, which is closer to the *'ilm al-asrâr*, the knowledge of [illegible] secrets, than to the knowledge of the intellectual speculation, *al-'ilm an-nazarî al-'aqlî*, but yet close [illegible] those who are devoted [illegible] *al-'ilm al-'aqlî ad-darûrî*, the aprioristic intellectual knowledge."[18]

Thus Ibn 'Arabi has found the connecting [illegible] in the two kinds of apriorism – the philosophical, having its [illegible] within the intellect (cf. Kant), and the spiritual, the [illegible] of which is to be found in God, and therefore can only [illegible] reached through spiritual experience [illegible] on a [illegible] made by [illegible] prophet (cf. Anselm, Cartesius). With the aid of conceptual identification *ex analogia*, and applying [illegible] of measuring based, as usual, on the 'medium' (*mutawassit*), he brings about a hierarchization of 'reason', 'spiritual states' and 'secrets'.

Now in order [illegible] illustrate further his attitude towards philosophy,

an attitude having some points in common with al-Ghazali's book, *al-Mustazhiri*, we can compare the following section from the preface:

> Don't let yourself be prevented – o student of this kind of knowledge, which the prophetical knowledge, inherited from them [i.e. the prophets] – when you come one of their problems, which philosopher (*faylasûf*), theological dialectician (*mutakallim*), speculative scholar, in any kind of knowledge, has mentioned, that you about such one mentions [the problem in question], being an insightful Sufi, philosopher just because the philosopher [in question] mentioned this problem professed it [as a doctrine] [thus] believed it, and [so that you say] [the Sufi] no religion (*dîn*) just because the philosopher already professed it without having religion.[19]

Ibn 'Arabi is here defending himself against the accusation of heresy when now, using his learning, he tries support his specific philosophy of the prophetical knowledge. This he could do more easily than the philosophers, by virtue of the divine origin of the intellect, having in any obtained *fusûs al-hikam*, 'sparks of wisdom'.

Let us see how he continues. says:

> So don't like this, o my brother, for such is a statement of a man who no truly scientific education (*tahsîl*), since not all the philosopher's knowledge is wrong, the problem in question, among those which he professes [as doctrines], might very well belong to the truth, especially if find that the Envoy already professed it, and especially then concerning what they [the philosophers] have laid down in books of wise sayings, and of liberation from the lusts and tricks of the souls and of what these contain of evil thoughts. If we don't know the realities (*haqâ'iq*, essences) must believe the of philosopher on this particular problem, thinking that it is true, for the Envoy professed it, or a Comrade, or Malik, or Sufyan ath-Thawri [died 778 in Basra]. As for your running: 'He [the Sufi] has it [the problem],' or: 'He has studied it in their books,' you will sometimes happen to be a liar and fool. As regards the lie, this is when you say: 'He has it,' or 'He read it,' without having seen him doing so. As for the foolishness, this is your failing to distinguish between truth and lie with regard the problem in question. Regarding your statement that the philosopher has no religion, the very fact that he has no religion does not prove that everything he believes is false, and this understood with sense by everyone who has any.[20]

From what has hitherto been said, it appears that Ibn 'Arabi wanted to let own highly personal variant of Sufism, the prophetical knowledge, implying in way the continuation of revelation, stand out as the highest level of the spiritual movement which, in al-Ghazali's great theological work, *Ihyâ' 'ulûm ad-dîn*, obtained the position of established discipline, acknowledged or not. Abu Nasr as-Sarraj (died 988) had started collecting systematizing the sayings of famous Sufis in order use them testimonies for the individualistic religion of the

heart (*qalb*) that is this movement, in contrast to the collectivistic, legalistic and dogmatic Islam which involved [redacted] made by the Prophet, his comrades, as well as other leading persons; as [redacted] heard, Ibn 'Arabi mentions [redacted] Ibn Anas (died 795) and ash-Shafi'i (died 820). In comparison with this orthodox, strictly historical tradition as a guarantor of the truth of Islam, Sufism was [redacted] with the problem of finding, within the framework of an extension of the notion of 'transmission', [redacted] Founding Fathers for its variant of Islam, and for the interpretation of the Qur'an which is in the centre of the Sufi movement; Ibn 'Arabi mentions, as we heard, Sufyan ath-Thawri.

Now here the philosophic tradition of the Greeks could also play a role, and especially the Stoics, not least in the [redacted] of ethics, in close connection with epistemology, [redacted] combination which is already to be found in Plato. For to him philosophy means the intellectual search for transcendent realities, while his doctrine of the cardinal virtues constitutes ethics [redacted] science, the point of departure being taken in the maxim 'knowledge is virtue'.

With this we have entered upon [redacted] very important phenomenon: the significance of the semantic development of the term 'philosophy' [redacted] Islamic religious philosophy. In conclusion, I shall now mention [redacted] important traits [redacted] the pre-Islamic history of this term.

As [redacted] heard, Ibn 'Arabi compared the aims of the *faylasûf* with those of the *muta'ahhib*, 'the ready one'. The first-mentioned word is an arabization of the Syriac *fylswf*, pronounced '*filasofa*' or '*filosufo*', i.e. the Greek compound *philó-sophos*, 'lover of wisdom' (*sophía*), thus [redacted] taining in itself the immensely productive Platonic theme 'Love and Knowledge'. However, while the first member of the compound is [redacted] rather neutral function of the second member, [redacted] shall concentrate on the latter, the *sophía*. For 'wisdom' is not the same to Plato and Isocrates; [redacted] is it the same to Philo Judaeus and Justin the Martyr, and Clement of Alexandria. To the Stoics who [redacted] 'The Wise Man' [redacted] their ideal, wisdom on the whole [redacted] that which the wise man knows.

Now through Philo, 'philosophy' obtains the meaning of the desire to know the revelation of the God of Israel, [redacted] well [redacted] the revelation itself [redacted] conceptual reality. While the Platonist was obliged to rely on his natural, rational forces in contemplating the ideas, the transcendent realities, the attitude of Philo implied the way downwards, from God to Man. For God has Himself given the revelation to [redacted] selected people, [redacted] He has created His [redacted] theology through the Torah, transmitted by Moses and the prophets, and through the Second Law transmitted by Scribes and Rabbis. In Justin the Martyr, [redacted] Jewish-Christian revelation is transmitted by the prophets and the friends of Jesus under the guidance of the Spirit, the very [redacted] of Jesus being [redacted] the [redacted] philosophy. This is, briefly, the background of the further development

through which the term 'philosophy' had passed ▬ the time when Islam is confronted with the 'People of the Scripture', i.e. Jews and Christians. Of the transmission theory of the Stoics, I have already spoken.

This ▬ give us an idea of the historical complexity of Ibn 'Arabi's doctrine of the *tawâtur*, 'tradition' , as ■ source of truth. In orthodox quarters Sufism was regarded with disfavour, and Ibn 'Arabi's variant ▬ no doubt a challenge. But, by his originality, the intensity of the exposition, the creative depth of his thinking, and his familiarity with the Islamic sciences, he is of great and immediate interest ▬ us also today. 'The whole is the truth,' said Hegel, and the whole of this man ▬ his uninterrupted endeavour to reach God, the Eternal, communicating his experiences to coming generations on the way he chose, or more correctly, the way that chose him!

NOTES

1. *Al-Futûhât al-Makkiyyah*, ed. Othman Yahya, Vol. I, 1972, p. 41.
2. Cf. Ibn al-Muqaffa', *al-Adab as-Saghir*, pp. 5 ff., Cairo 1911.
3. *Futûhât*, Vol. I, p. 41.
4. Cf. al-Ghazali, *Ihyâ'*, Introduction.
5. *Futûhât*, Vol. I, p. 138.
6. Cf. the Platonic *anamnesis*.
7. *Futûhât*, Vol I, p. 138.
8. Cf. Qur'an 18:65.
9. *Futûhât*, Vol. I, p. 154.
10. Qur'an, 41:42.
11. *Futûhât*, Vol. I, p. 155.
12. Ibid.
13. Ibid.
14. Ibn al-Muqaffa', *al-Adab al Kabir*, Cairo, 1913, pp. 55–7.
15. *Futûhât*, Vol. I, p. 147.
16. Al-Ghazali, *Maqâsid al-falâsifa*, ed. S. Dunya, Cairo, 1961, p. 34.
17. Ibid., p. 34.
18. *Futûhât*, Vol. I, p. 147.
19. *Futûhât*, Vol. I, p. 145.
20. *Futûhât*, Vol. I, pp. 145–6.

The Polarity of Expression in the Fusûs al-Hikam

MUSTAFA TAHRALI

Whether they [illegible] for or against, it is well known to all readers of the *Fusûs al-Hikam* that it contains many contradictory, paradoxical and antinomic meanings. For example:

> At [illegible] a moment, the [illegible] will [illegible] Lord without doubt, [illegible] at another the [illegible] [illegible] servant, certainly.[1]
>
> Under this aspect God is [illegible] – so interpret: and [illegible] (God) isn't [illegible] under another aspect – [illegible] remember.[2]
>
> God, who [illegible] transcendent in the sense of *tanzîh*, is [illegible] a comparable [illegible] in the sense of [illegible] – although the [illegible] [illegible] distinct from the Creator. Reality is Creator created, or else, Reality is creature creating.[3]
>
> . . . [illegible] [illegible] of the relative that it is Him (that is to say, God) and [illegible] it is not Him: and that you are you and not you.[4]
>
> Man is at once ephemeral and eternal, [illegible] being created perpetual and immortal.[5]
>
> [illegible] [illegible] thus [illegible] [illegible] same time God [illegible] creature.[6]
>
> You are not Him; and you [illegible] yet Him.[7]
>
> You say thus that [illegible] reality of the Existence (*al-amr*) is [illegible] (*Haqq*) entirely, or that it is entirely creature. Or it is creature under one aspect and it is God under another, while [illegible] [illegible] (itself) [illegible] unique . . . He (God) is [illegible] who manifests and [illegible] who receives manifestation.[8]

In trying to understand such expressions human understanding, which is generally under the sway of rational logic, becomes perplexed or shocked, [illegible] the (general) rules of discourse, especially those of non-contradiction, [illegible] not respected. From this apparent incoherence the adversaries of Ibn 'Arabi take one side of these pronouncements [illegible] set to criticizing, instead of understanding them by taking them [illegible] together.

As we know, [illegible] book of the *Fusûs* is [illegible] one hand [illegible] resumé of [illegible] *Futûhât* and of Ibn 'Arabi's other works, [illegible] [illegible] the other [illegible] perfect doctrine of the subtleties encountered from [illegible] end of the initiate's journey [illegible] the other. In this latter sense it is the most perfect description of [illegible] templation [illegible] unveiling that could be made in human language. It [illegible] completely natural that man should be perplexed when [illegible] with such descriptions. As Ibn 'Arabi says: 'Discursive [illegible] will [illegible] understand,

for this order of knowledge belongs uniquely to divine intuition (*al-kashf al-ilâhi*).''

Now [illegible] see in the *Fusûs* that Ibn 'Arabi examines certain basic problems of faith, such as belief in the Unity of God (*tawhîd*), in the prophets, and in predestination (*qadâ'* and *qadar*) etc. – [illegible] under the light of the gifts of revelation and contemplation, which are in some ways the specific activity of the heart. All knowledges [illegible] acquired by this faculty, through which each believer [illegible] the spiritual domain.

From the study of the gifts obtained by the activity of the heart, [illegible] that the logic of spiritual knowledge differs from that of reason, which functions in the duality constituted by the Divine and the created. If God is One and Creator, as the believer's heart holds (or believes), what then is the relationship between God and creature? It is not enough to believe in a Unique, Creator God to respond to certain questions. Since the Divine Being is One and Infinite, where then is the existence of the created, and from what does it draw its existence? To reply that it is outside the Divine Being would mean a limitation on the Infinite Being; or else, if it draws its existence from nothingness where it is created [illegible] *nihilo*, that would [illegible] to suggest two existences: one positive, [illegible] Divine Being; the other, negative, the origin of the created; that would then be [illegible] limitation [illegible] the Infinite Being, albeit in [illegible] negative way. From the Quranic *sûrah*: 'God encloses everything' (4:126) [illegible] [illegible] shown that God surrounds them equally by His Being as by His Science, before and after their being brought into existence. Now it is necessary that there should [illegible] no existence except Him.

How then to situate existence with respect to the Divine Being? Ibn 'Arabi replies thus: 'Reality (*al-amr*) in entirety, from its beginning to its end comes from God alone; it is to Him that it returns.'[10] Since all existence begins in God and returns to God, it is divine in the [illegible] of its beginning and at its end. Now it must be divine in its actual state, and thus 'there is nothing other than Him'.[11]

'O Thou who createth', writes Ibn 'Arabi, 'all things in Thyself, Thou encompassest everything, everything that Thou createst; Thou createth that whose existence [illegible] no end in Thyself.'[12] And, moreover, [illegible] says:

> Since God (*al-Haqq*) is the Ipseity of the Universe, all predications (*al-ahkâm*) only manifest in Him and from Him. It is to Him that [illegible] reality (*al-amr*) [illegible] (Quran 11:123) in truth (*haqîqatan*) and according [illegible] unveiling (*kashfan*).[13]

Commentating [illegible] this sentence Ahmed Avni Konuk (1868–1938) says:

> God is, by [illegible] Attributes [illegible] His Names, [illegible] [illegible] active (*fâ'il*) and passive (*munfa'il*). It is according to this relationship that [illegible] attribute [illegible] predications to God, which only manifest in [illegible] and from Him.[14]

If Ibn 'Arabi considers things from this point of view, he will state:

'under this aspect God [illegible] creature',[15] and 'at such [illegible] moment the servant will be Lord, without doubt'.[16] We notice in the commentary on the *Fusûs* that these terms are replaced by [illegible] others, such as, the Beloved and the lover, the Known and the knower, the Creator [illegible] the created, the Praised and the one who praises, and so on. There is expressed the similarity between the two terms 'active' and 'passive', [illegible] this affirmation [illegible] seen [illegible] the subjects studied.

The affirmation of similarity under such a consideration is [illegible] aspect of the doctrine of unity (*tawhîd*), named for centuries by the term 'Unity of Being' (*wahdat al-wujûd*), which necessitates by its [illegible] paradoxical expressions.

That said, this doctrine which seems so simple [illegible] first glance contains a number of almost indefinable [illegible] [illegible] see a part of these subtleties expressed in the concept of the *hadarât*, the divine presences, that [illegible] say, [illegible] states [illegible] degrees of the Being. It is the One [illegible] Divine Being which manifests Itself in an indefinite number of degrees. [illegible] 'Arabi speaks, as one knows, of the five *hadarât*, which are in some way limits of self-expression. Developing from the doctrine of Ibn 'Arabi, certain *'akbarian'* authors, such as Muhyiddin ibn [illegible] al-Hindi, cite [illegible] degrees (*maratib*)[17] which we believe makes understanding easier.

It seems (to me) that, through this consideration of the *hadarât*, obtained and verified by revelation [illegible] contemplation, [illegible] arrives [illegible] the explanation of certain questions concerning the similarity and also the principal reason for contradictory expressions. We have just stated that [illegible] Creator is [illegible] created. If [illegible] recognized [illegible] [illegible] and [illegible] this affirmation of similarity, how then will [illegible] reply to the following objection: if the Creator is the creature, either the latter [illegible] [illegible] existence, [illegible] else there is no Creator distinct in any way from the creature?

We know from our [illegible] and from [illegible] reason that the creature exists – and Ibn 'Arabi himself admits it – and one's 'heart' believes that God exists. How then [illegible] establish the relationship between God and [illegible] as two existences? 'The similarity and the difference are', writes Ahmed Avni Konuk, the commentator on the *Fusûs*, 'at [illegible] same time real between the divine Being and the whole of existence'.[18] They [illegible] explained by the doctrine of the *hadarât* [illegible] *maratib* (degrees of Being).[19]

We shall examine [illegible] briefly in the seven degrees with respect to the similarity [illegible] the difference between God and [illegible]

1. **The degree** [illegible] [illegible] (*la ta'ayyun*): this is the degree of pure Essence (*dhât*), of the Absolute Unity (literally 'of the Unity and of the Absolute'). At this degree God is removed from all attribute, revelation, manifestation and determination. 'He is [illegible] just [illegible] He was' before the existence of creatures. Now every believer affirms with his 'heart' [illegible] Divine Essence (*dhât Allah*), although all the gnostics

('*ureſa*) as well as the believers are necessarily in agreement with this statement, according which 'He will be just as He was.' We have knowledge of this degree, since it is non-manifestation of the non-manifest. It only be the object of faith in the heart. Thus this degree it is a question of neither similarity nor difference, since there is only pure Essence.

2. **The degree the Unicity, of the first determination and the Muhammadian Reality**; this degree knows synthetically all its Attributes and Names. The divine Attributes identical there to the very Essence of God. He is there called '*Allah*', who brings together all the Names and Attributes by which He will be designated. At this degree is found the origin of the multiplicity and the creatures in principle. Since all the divine Attributes and are there identical to Essence, and, since the principle of multiplicity is found this degree, there is therefore complete similarity (literally 'identity') between the divine Essence and His Attributes, and between the divine Unicity the multiplicity. Now, in this degree there is nothing unless is Allah, 'there is there only He, Alone', and 'there is nothing but He'.
3. **The degree of the determination, of Unity pro-totypes** (*al-a'yân al-thâbita*): these latter the forms of the divine Science and possess only immutable fixity; they have existence of their own outside of this. 'The prototypes have smelt the odour of existence',[20] says Ibn 'Arabi. It is this second origin of the multiplicity, where forms distinguish themselves one from another, and from where each creature draws its existence. The creatures are the shadows (*zill*) of these immutable prototypes, which in their turn shadows of the divine Attributes and Names.The realities of the creatures are situated this degree, and there each of the prototypes is the particular Lord of a created being. Since the realities of the creatures are these immutable prototypes, and, since these are only the forms of the divine Science in the Divine Being and have no existence outside (of Him), they are thus identical to the divine Essence; and from that, the particular realities of the creatures identical to God, and each created existent is identical to its Lord.

At this and the preceding degree speaks thus of the identicalness (or 'identity') between the Real (*haqq*) and the creature, and (between) the Lord and the servant. One must not forget that at the degree of the *a'yân al-thâbita* there is complete identity between these prototypes to another, for there they distinct, whereas at the degree of the first determination they not differentiated one from another.

Muhyiddin ibn Fadlallah al-Hindi says: 'These three degrees eternal, with neither beginning end. Their sequencing is not temporal, but mental and speculative.'[21] One thus the meaning of the following

sentences of Ibn 'Arabi: 'Man is [redacted] once ephemeral and eternal, [redacted] being created perpetual and immortal.' The words 'eternal', 'perpetual' and 'immortal' allude to these two degrees of the Being. 'At such [redacted] the servant will be Lord, without doubt'; 'under such an aspect God is creature'; 'Adam is thus at the [redacted] time God and creature.' All these quotes [redacted] to these two degrees wherein divinity and Lordship [redacted] be attributed to man and creature.

4. **The world of pure spirits (*'âlam al-arwâh*)**: this is the third degree of descent or determination of the Being. The spirits know one another, and also recognize their [redacted] Lords which [redacted] the immutable prototypes. There one alludes to the following *sûrah*: 'Am I not your Lord?' (Qur'an 7:172). Ahmed Avni Konuk, commentator on the *Fusûs* in Turkish, writes that 'this is the first degree of determination where the divine Reality manifests and theophanizes (Itself) with a certain difference between Itself and contingent existence'.[22] For, according to the *sûrah*, there exists a difference between the Lordly 'I' and the 'your' designating the spirits. But it is [redacted] yet [redacted] question [redacted] this degree of a differentiation between the Lord and the servant, since it concerns the inspiration of the divine spirit.
5. **The degree of the subtle world**: the divine Being determines Itself apart there in certain subtle forms. Thus at this level of theophany there appears [redacted] subtle, sensible difference between the Creator and the creature.
6. [redacted] [redacted] of [redacted] this is the degree of corporeal creation and material existence where the difference between the Creator and [redacted] created is quite real and apparent, even though [redacted] existence, which [redacted] the product of the theophanies of the divine Names and Attributes, is considered 'a shadow'[23] and 'an illusion in illusion',[24] for [redacted] such it finds itself existenced [redacted] being other [redacted] God.

It is quite clear that it is from this degree of manifestation that come the [redacted] of Ibn 'Arabi, such as: 'at such a [redacted] the [redacted] will be servant, certainly'; 'He (God) is not [redacted] under another aspect'; 'you are not He'; 'Adam is thus [redacted] the same time God and creature,' and 'such [redacted] . . . ephemeral'. Thus in this degree God is God, the creature is creature.

7. [redacted] **degree** [redacted] **the perfect** [redacted] [redacted] **Man, who englobes and realizes in himself the five preceding degrees. When one considers things in relation to this degree, which is universal Man's, he is** [redacted] 'ephemeral and eternal'. [redacted] is 'eternal' because he has realized in his own ascension the degrees of Eternity and Immutability; and [redacted] is 'ephemeral' by the fact of finding himself corporeally in the degree of the world of bodies.

[redacted] talking of the Perfect Man, Ibn 'Arabi always expresses himself with paradoxical and antinomic sayings, or with a polarity which

contains [redacted] the same time the identity and the difference.

If he takes into consideration the Essence of the divine Being which manifests Itself by Its Names and Attributes, and which penetrates all existence, he speaks of identity; but, [redacted] the other hand, he affirms [redacted] difference between the Divine and the created if [redacted] considers only the sensible determination; again, if he considers things in the degrees of the first [redacted] second determinations, that is [redacted] say, in their Essence [redacted] their prototype, he speaks of identity.

In conclusion, [redacted] will say that it is necessary to refer [redacted] its proper degree each expression where Ibn 'Arabi speaks of the identity and [redacted] difference, or the two [redacted] the [redacted] time, between God and creature.

We will [redacted] examine the identity [redacted] the difference, or the polarity of expressions, with respect to the doctrine of 'perpetual creation' (*khalq jadîd*).

Ibn 'Arabî [redacted] out the doctrine of the new creation in chapter 12 of the *Fusûs* where he writes:

> As for the people of unveiling, they see that Allah epiphanizes Himself at every instant without any of [redacted] theophanies ever repeating itself; they see also, by direct contemplation, [redacted] each theophany brings [redacted] [redacted] creation and causes the preceding creation to disappear. This disappearance is the extinction (*fanâ'*) which [redacted] when the theophany befalls; [but it is at the same time] [redacted] by reason of that which brings each theophany.[25]

From this passage we take the following lesson: since [redacted] theophany brings [redacted] new creation, and since the next causes the preceding to disappear, the existence [redacted] [redacted] and [redacted] part of is thus only the result of half, if one can say, of a series of theophanies which make it remain [redacted] [redacted] determination other than God; in this state of subsistence of the creation there is a difference between God and creature. If one considers the other half of a series of theophanies where the creatures are extinguished, only God remains there, and they [redacted] completely identical to God in this [redacted] of extinction by only having reality [redacted] [redacted] level of the immutable prototypes. Thus [redacted] speaks of the identity between God and all existence.

It [redacted] that the gnostic arrives [redacted] the [redacted] of this identity in the spiritual state (*hâl*) [redacted] *fanâ'* (extinction) in Sufi terminology. We believe it is possible to make a connection between this initiatory extinction [redacted] the one which [redacted] in this [redacted] concerning [redacted] [redacted] creation which [redacted] Chodkiewicz [redacted] to allude to in his book.[26]

Let us [redacted] again to the doctrine of identity and difference between God and [redacted] under the perspective of perpetual creation. Since each theophany which brings [redacted] new creation comes only from God and returns only to Him, theophany being produced by His Names [redacted] these being identical [redacted] His Essence, and, since everything comes from God, happens in God and returns to God, there is nothing there other than

God. Therefore there is identity between God and creature. If [redacted] consider [redacted] creation in its aspect of subsistence in [redacted] corporeal determination, [redacted] say that there is [redacted] difference between God and creature; while in its aspect of extinction, the creature having disappeared and become inexistent with the entirety of the degree of the world of bodies, there is identity, [redacted] even better, there is only God Alone.

How [redacted] contemplate 'the new creation' at each instant when he [redacted] to be other than God [redacted] the level of subsistence, and when he has no existence to have any sensation [redacted] all [redacted] the level of dissolution? We would say by rising again in his ascension to the [redacted] of identity in the second and first determinations, that is to say, to the degrees of the immutable prototypes and the Muhammadian Realities. Here he will have the intuitive [redacted] of identity, and in consequence, being subsistent in God and by God, he will contemplate a new creation [redacted] each instant. Ibn 'Arabi states quite clearly in the passage just cited that these are 'the people of unveiling . . . (who) see . . . by direct contemplation'.

Now as [redacted] are in the realm of the gifts of unveiling and contemplation, we will [redacted] before [redacted] paradoxical expressions. For 'the people of unveiling' contemplate both 'the subsistence' and 'the extinction' of existence, including their own. How then [redacted] he make a single one of them stand out? He describes what he [redacted] and how he sees, while discursive reason, rational logic in the world of bodies, conditioned by the laws and habits of this world, can only speak about the former and respect its integrity in his discourse.

To define the contemplative and intuitive nature of this discourse we can say that it is paradoxical if one considers it in relation to the degree of manifestation of the divine Being; or in relation to seeing any creature in its cycle of existence beginning in God and returning to Him, or again according to its phase of existentiation [redacted] extinction in the 'perpetual creation' – which is itself alternating between appearance and dissolution where the succession of polarized theophanies necessitates, moreover, a discourse involving a similar polarization.

Once the gnostic realizes the supreme identity or the degree of perfect man, he may describe existence in several ways, as Ibn 'Arabi says:

> Describe [redacted] existence [redacted] you will; if you wish, you [redacted] say it is creature; if you wish, you [redacted] say it is God; and if you wish, you [redacted] say it is God-creature; [redacted] else, if you wish, you [redacted] [redacted] that it isn't God in every aspect [redacted] [redacted] it isn't [redacted] in every aspect; [redacted] yet again you [redacted] speak of perplexity.[27]

The lesson [redacted] take from this passage is that if the initiate perfectly realizes his spiritual journey he will acquire [redacted] knowledge which in its expressions [redacted] beyond ordinary language. For, [redacted] Ibn 'Arabi said to his disciple Badr al-Habashi:

> . . . in every [redacted] he is with God; if he speaks, it is according to God; if [redacted] down, it is with God; if he comes, it is from God; if he goes, it is [redacted] God; if [redacted] sits in company, that is in God. He is by God, according to God, with God, from God, towards God, in God.[28]

Now, this person must express himself completely 'according to God'. He finds himself qualified by the Divine contradictory attributes [redacted] manifests himself with the [redacted] language [redacted] that of God and the Quran.

Before finishing I would like to [redacted] a few words. While I and a colleague of mine [redacted] preparing the edition of Ahmed Avni Konuk's *Commentary* [redacted] *the Fusûs*, I had the impression on studying it that I [redacted] being forced [redacted] think in a circular way, or [redacted] turn back on myself like [redacted] which [redacted] becoming a circle. I realized that it must be that which distinguishes the style of the *Fusûs al-Hikam* from other works.

While reading recently Claude Addas' magnificent study of Ibn 'Arabi I was attracted by several phrases which seemed to justify my impressions: Ibn 'Arabi attained the 'station of light' where he 'became light' and consequently 'following the example of the Prophet, who said he [redacted] behind his back, he became a "head without a body" (*wajh bi* [redacted] *qafâ*), a total eye, capable of comprehending [redacted] directions in space'; and she quotes from Ibn 'Arabi:

> I [redacted] longer [redacted] either back or front, and with this vision I no longer made any distinction between different directions, I was like a sphere . . .[29]

Now Ibn 'Arabi surely reflects the effect of this realization [redacted] his expressions and [redacted] a style which is 'spherical', if [redacted] can so term it, and writes in polarities according to the vision arriving from opposing directions. Claude Addas adds in addition that Ibn 'Arabi was favoured with 'the station of illumination'. 'The [redacted] who receives this illumination', says Ibn 'Arabi:

> [redacted] incapable of conceiving his discourse interiorly, then ordering it with reflective thought and finally enunciating it. For him the moment that he speaks [redacted] the same [redacted] that he conceives the discourse through which he [redacted] [redacted] thought.[30]

With this I thus finish this essay in which I have tried in a partial and, I admit, schematic way to indicate the probable [redacted] for the paradoxical expressions in the *Fusûs al-Hikam*.

NOTES

1–7. Ibn 'Arabi, *Fusûs al-Hikam* (Ed. Affifi, 1946), pp. 90,79,78,76,50,56,70. We have also used the translation by Titus Burckhardt, *La Sagesse* [redacted] *Prophètes, Paris*, 1955, pp. 90,66,64,63,25,35,61.

8. *Fusûs*, I, p. 121.
9. ., p. 49, (*La Sagesse des Prophètes*, p. 24).
10. Ibid., p. 49, (*La Sagesse des Prophètes*, 21–2).
11. Ibid., p. 76, (*La Sagesse des Prophètes*, p. 62).
12. Ibid., p. 88, (*La Sagesse des Prophètes*, p. 86).
13. Ibid., I, p. 172.
14. Avni Konuk, *Fusûsu'l Hikem Tercüme ve Şerhi*, III, Istanbul, 1990, Ayyûb, p. 324.
15. *La Sagesse des Prophètes*, p. 66; *Fusûs*, I, p. 79.
16. Ibid., p. 90; *Fusûs*, I, p.
17. Ibn Fazlallah al-Hindi, *Le Cadeau sur la Manifestation Prophète* (trans. Abdul-Hâdî) in *Le Traité de l'Unité dit d'Ibn 'Arabî* (L'Echelle édition, Paris, 1977, pp. 49–62. See also the article of M. Chodkiewicz, 'L'Offrande au Prophète al-Burhanpuri' in Review *Connaissance des Religions*, IV. No. 1/2 June–September 1988, pp. 30–40. Ahmed Avni Konuk (d. 1938), the Turkish commentator on the *Fusûs*, deals mainly with the seven *marâtib* in the introduction to his commentary and during the commentary itself; uses the five *hadarât*, cf. *Fusûsu'l Tercüme ve Şerhi*, Istanbul, 1987, I, pp. 4–68.
18. Ahmed Avni Konuk, op. cit., I, p. 64.
19. Concerning identity difference with regard to the seven *marâtib*, article the beginning of the second volume of the *Commentary the Fusûs* by Ahmed Avni Konuk, pp. 27–36.
20. *Fusûs al-Hikam*, I, p. 76.
21. Ibn Fazlallah, op. cit., p. 52.
22. Ahmed Avni Konuk, op. cit., I, p. 25.
23. *Fusûs al-Hikam*, I, p. 101.
24. Ibid., p. 104.
25. Ibid., p. 126. We have used here the translation of M. Chodkiewicz: see Awhad al-Din Balyani, *Epitre sur l'Unicité Absolue* (trans. M. Chodkiewicz), Paris, 1982, p. 50 10.
26. Ibid., p. note 10.
27. *Fusûs al-Hikam*, I, p. 112.
28. Abdallah al-Habashî, *al-inbâh 'ala târiq Allah*, (ed. by Gril), of the *Annales Islamologiques*, Cairo Vol. XV 1979, p. 127.
29. Claude Addas, *'Arabî La Quête Soufre Rouge*, Gallimard, 1989, p. 182.
30. Ibid., p. 169.

Quantum, Chaos, and the Oneness of Being

Meditations on the *Kitâb al-Alef*

PETER LAMBORN WILSON

In Memoriam Bulent Rauf

Star-watcher, be my intimate Companion;
Spy on the lightning, my night-time friend.
'Arabi, *Tarjumân al Ashwâq* XVI

Leave what thou thinking. There is no difference between the beings of Him thee.

Kitâb al-Alef, 12

Some years ago in review of Fritjof Capra's *The Tao of Physics*, I noted his tendency to make comparisons between the 'frontier' sciences and the Far Eastern as opposed to Western Middle Eastern traditions – tendency which has continued in such later works as Gary Zukav's *The Dancing Wu Li Masters*. What might be called the 'cosmic' aspect of the Far Eastern traditions, their emphasis on ontology rather than theology, makes them obviously immediately attractive to 'post-Christian' thinkers than the Abrahamic traditions - moreover, Western science and Western religion are often seen as enemies rather than allies, while the Far Eastern paths have remained *hors de combat*, relatively untouched by the raging battle between materialism and supernaturalism so typical of the West.

Nevertheless, in my review, I suggested certain Western spiritual figures worth re-evaluating in the light of modern science, notably the Great Shaykh Ibn 'Arabi and his school. I felt this project would prove worthwhile, only for the sake of its inherent interest, but also defence of the subtlety of the West. An investigation of alchemy, for example, might well prove similarly fruitful, my instincts suggest. Unfortunately, I concluded (at that time), that both these projects would demand of expertise far beyond my scope: only an insider's knowledge of physics maths, but also vast acquaintance with Sufi

literature or alchemical literature – neither of which I possessed then [illegible] possess now. However, I have grown tired of waiting for [illegible] else [illegible] stumble upon this notion, or some fool foolish enough to undertake [illegible] comparative study of Ibn 'Arabi and frontier physics. Perhaps I must rush in [illegible] this vast subject, knowing how soon my ignorance will betray me, in the hope that [illegible] angel will eventually follow – if only [illegible] chastise me for my errors.

In making certain tentative comparisons, I intend [illegible] avoid the pathetic banality of claiming that ancient revelations somehow 'predicted' modern science, that the Qur'an, for example, can [illegible] decoded [illegible] a treatise on subatomic particles, [illegible] the Vedas as [illegible] foreshadowing of general relativity, or that Atlantis and Mu destroyed themselves with atom bombs. Similarly distasteful is the suggestion that thanks to modern science we can [illegible] clear up and refine certain primitive crudities in the ancient revelations, [illegible] if the Qur'an or the Vedas [illegible] [illegible] more than failed attempts, interesting but childish assaults on the citadel of pure science which [illegible] moderns so smugly inhabit.

Thus, we assume the infallibility of neither ancients nor moderns – but [illegible] must and do [illegible] that wisdom is [illegible] jewel of many facets, or a light composed of many veils of light and darkness, veils which can be torn aside one by one forever without exhausting the subtlety of truth. If the material world indeed consists of 'signs' for those of 'discernment' as the Qur'an says, then the meditations of a scientist [illegible] a Sufi might well end by reflecting each other; they might reverberate [illegible] resonate with each other in ways that enhance our experience of wisdom, even if [illegible] bewilderment (in the Prophet's phrase) is only increased thereby.

The concept of *al-wahdat al-wujûd*, [illegible] the [illegible] of being, requires in the present [illegible] neither explanation nor defense. Moreover, [illegible] here may take [illegible] axiomatic the universality of this concept. Advaita Vedanta, Zen, Eckhart, the radical Protestant mystics, Taoism, Renais- [illegible] neo-Platonism, Ibn 'Arabi, the Isma'ilis . . . [illegible] again, the human intellect has discovered different ways to express the [illegible] of radical monism, the perception that reality is unified not only [illegible] a transcendent but also on an immanent level, that 'all is one' in quite [illegible] literal sense. Cultural drift and historical influence [illegible] account for the ubiquity and timelessness of this realization. Those modern scientists who arrived [illegible] strikingly similar conclusions about reality discovered only later the strange coincidence with ancient mystical teachings. We [illegible] hypothesize the probability that *al-wahdat al-wujûd* reflects something of the deep underlying nature of things, and that Sufism and quantum mechanics really do sometimes talk about [illegible] and the same reality. On this assumption, [illegible] [illegible] compare the vocabularies of both systems in the hope of mutual illumination and consequently [illegible] enrichment of our own appreciation of both. I wish to avoid any dogmatism on the

question of who might benefit [redacted] from this experiment – I do [redacted] claim that scientists must learn from Sufis nor Sufis from scientists. Very simply, I wish to learn from both, and especially from that resonance of comparison in which the [redacted] delicate and original harmonies might be discerned.

In science, [redacted] least since Einstein, [redacted] trend [redacted] be noted away from Cartesian dualism [redacted] Newtonian mechanism, towards a unification of reality. Space and time [redacted] [redacted] as aspects of [redacted] single continuum, and in the search for [redacted] Unified Field theory, Einstein and his followers worked on the assumption that [redacted] [redacted] radical unifications and identifications can be made. Stephen Hawking, the current [redacted] of this school, believes that within the next twenty years a Grand Unified Theory (or 'GUT') will emerge to reconcile the so-called four basic forces in physics, gravity, electromagnetism and the strong and weak forces. The Big Bang theory and the existence of black holes and 'naked singularities' point in Hawking's view towards [redacted] single expression of the origin of [redacted] and energy, a beginning of time and the universe (or multiverse). These [redacted] have suggested (to some people) some parallels with traditional concepts such as the infinite but bounded expanding/contracting universe of Hinduism. Yet, interestingly, Hawking himself has declared all comparisons between physics and Oriental wisdom to [redacted] sheer 'rubbish'. In his view, [redacted] unified theory is [redacted] [redacted] all the same thing as an expression of the [redacted] of being. In effect, by maintaining the inevitability of [redacted] final and complete [redacted] of theorems to describe reality, Hawking may simply be attempting to extend mechanism and dualism to their logical conclusion – for the existence of [redacted] GUT, [redacted] Grand Unified Theory, implies the existence of [redacted] separate consciousness to apprehend and grasp the Grand Unified Theory. An observer and [redacted] observed, a machine with two parts. If, [redacted] Thomas Kuhn believes, social and psychological perceptions underlie all scientific paradigms, then Hawking would appear still [redacted] be searching for that Judeo-Christian God who does not play dice with the universe (so dear [redacted] Einstein's imagination); even though Hawking claims to accept quantum mechanics and its 'god', who (in John Wheeler's words) [redacted] only plays dice with the universe, but throws them where [redacted] can't find them. In short, Hawking's nostalgia for finality implies (to me) a theology underlying [redacted] cosmology, [redacted] yearning for a creator-god. Post-Einsteinian physics of this sort might better [redacted] [redacted] pared with monotheism [redacted] even deism than with monism.

Personally, I find Hawking's belief in the end of physics a depressing notion. A universe stripped of mystery would quickly become a hell of boredom. Reality, according to the *hadith*, is veiled with seventy thousand (i.e. an infinity of) veils of light and dark. To penetrate them [redacted] would collapse the fabric of reality. As Ibn 'Arabi pointed [redacted] in his commentary on this [redacted] in the *Tarjumân*, God's Mercy [redacted] precisely

in the ultimate impenetrability of reality's fabric, for being itself depends [redacted] essential unknowableness of the Unity. '*The Tao that* [redacted] *be spoken is not the Tao.*' In the dance of Shiva, in the changing multiplicity of the ten thousand things, there and only there does the Unity unveil itself.

Hawking is correct to [redacted] that this kind of 'Oriental Wisdom' is inimical to [redacted] hopes. But other branches of modern science than his might revel in the idea that reality's essential uncertainty or unprovability is equally important [redacted] the idea of its oneness. Heisenberg's famous Uncertainty Principle and Gödel's Proof of the unprovability of mathematics, do no violence to the idea of the oneness of being. In fact, they support such concepts of unity. However, they do in fact imply that any mathematical or physical description or 'map' of the universe (reality) would have to be exactly [redacted] big [redacted] the reality it describes – whereupon the universe would double in size – whereupon you would need a new description based [redacted] that doubling – and so [redacted] in infinite regress – with [redacted] end [redacted] the unfolding of those infinities which drove Georg Cantor mad, and drove Ibn 'Arabi to sanctity – the unending stripping away of veils of light and darkness.

The Quantum theorists happily inhabit [redacted] universe which is not only 'stranger than [redacted] imagined, but stranger than [redacted] [redacted] imagine,' [redacted] rather Alice-like world in which Schroedinger's Cat may [redacted] both simultaneously alive and dead, in which particles [redacted] to communicate telepathically, [redacted] else – viewed in [redacted] certain light – suddenly become [redacted] instead of particles. Quantum mechanics has reinserted human consciousness into [redacted] central position in its world view, a position from which modern science supposedly banished all such spooks long ago. According to the usual 'orthodox' Copenhagen interpretation of quantum mechanics, the observer participates and is inextricably involved in the universe observed. In a sense [redacted] create by the [redacted] of observation. This leads the Copenhagenists to declare, 'There is no deep reality.' Objects, everyday real things, 'float on a world that is not as real'. (Bohr and Heisenberg, respectively.) Other theorists, however, interpret quantum differently. For Heitler, Bohm and others, 'reality is an undivided wholeness'. In this interpretation, 'the observer appears as [redacted] necessary part of the whole structure and in his full capacity as a conscious being. The separation of the world into an "objective outside reality" and "us", the self-conscious onlookers, can [redacted] longer be maintained. Object and subject have become inseparable from each other.' According to Bohm, 'one is led to a new notion of unbroken wholeness which denies the classical analysability of the world into separately and independently existing parts . . . The inseparable quantum interconnectedness of the whole universe is the fundamental reality.' Bell's Theorem, which proves or [redacted] [redacted] prove that quantum reality is non-local, bolsters rather than deflates the very

Ibn 'Arabi-like contentions of Bohm [illegible] his theories of 'implicate wholeness'. Something in Bell's Theorem [illegible] violating Einstein's cosmic speed limit. Some super-luminal ether [illegible] field, [illegible] faster-than-light particle, or [illegible] 'telepathic' particle.

The crux of quantum mechanics is the question of the collapse of the [illegible] function, the point [illegible] which probability 'becomes' actuality. Everett [illegible] Wheeler offer the delightful notion that the wave function [illegible] collapses, that all possible [illegible] occur, but in alternative parallel universes, [illegible] notion beloved of science fiction writers as well [illegible] mystics. To quote from [illegible] wonderful cranky little pamphlet called *The Subatomic World in the Qur'an* by 'Aisha Abdul Rahman at-Tarjumana:

> As for some of the other worlds Ibn 'Arabi mentions them in [illegible] *Meccan Revelations*. He also gives [illegible] source in the [illegible] from [illegible] of the companions of the Prophet, Abdullah Ibn 'Abbas. [illegible] stated that the *Ka'ba* is one of the fourteen houses, and that each of the [illegible] earths has [illegible] creation like [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] there is [illegible] Ibn 'Abbas in each of them. Ibn al-'Arabi states that this is verified by [illegible] experience of the gnostics, and he describes some of the earths which he visited. [illegible] description of the earths which [illegible] created from the earth left over from the clay of Adam is truly extraordinary. First, He (that is, God) created the date palm from [illegible] (that is, from this clay), and then, 'there [illegible] some clay left after he created the date palm. It [illegible] the size of [illegible] sesame seed, and Allâh stretched out [illegible] earth from that [illegible] of clay whose expanse [illegible] immense. Had the Throne and what it contains, the Footstool, the earth, what is under the earth, all the Gardens and the Fire been put into this earth, all of it would have been like a ring cast into the desert.' This is [illegible] incredible field. The word for 'expanse' is also 'space'. This earth was originally [illegible] point and then it became a world, a field, utterly vast beyond imagination. He (that is, Ibn 'Arabi) says that 'in every breath Allâh creates worlds which glorify night and day'. Worlds are constantly being brought into existence. He describes [illegible] of those worlds which he visited. Among them [illegible] the land of red gold (where one of [illegible] years is sixty of theirs), the land of white silver, the land of white camphor, and the land of saffron.

The sheer fantasia of such theories as Copenhagen anti-realism or the multiple worlds hypothesis have caused a reaction called 'neo-realism'. (This term I lifted from [illegible] book called *Quantum Reality* by Nick Herbert, which I recommend very strongly.) Einstein, Planck, Schroedinger, Bohm, [illegible] de Broglie have all looked for ways to 'save the phenomena', [illegible] discover [illegible] describe Quantum Reality *per se*, rather than take the disagreeable step of agreeing with Copenhagian anti-realism. ('Atoms [illegible] [illegible] things', [illegible] Heisenberg said; or 'There *is* no quantum world', as Bohr says.) Reconciling the neo-realist project with Quantum facts leads to some very peculiar positions, such as maintaining that the world is real but non-local, as in Bell's Theorem.

Could [illegible] be that the quarrel between anti-realists and neo-realists arises from a *semantic* problem about the definition of 'reality'? In my

ignorance it looks to me as if both sides [illegible] maintaining that reality means *Classical* reality. Thus the Copenhagenists [illegible] forced to deny that ordinary objects exist – [illegible] absurdity – while the neo-realists are reduced to looking for loopholes in quantum mechanics, and [illegible] so far to have [illegible] utterly frustrated. [illegible] if Quantum Reality [illegible] ordinary reality [illegible] *both* real, modalities of the [illegible] [illegible] reality, then the dichotomy vanishes like a delusion caused by bad grammar. The only problem then remaining is that of quantum measurement, which asks, in effect, how 'quantumstuff' *becomes* 'ordinary objects'.

'Consciousness [illegible] reality.' Von Neumann posits that only one kind of stuff exists, quantumstuff, and that ordinary objects are 'made' of it. At some point the wave function, the all-possible [illegible] of quantumstuff, collapses into a single statistical probability, [illegible] quantum jump which somehow 'creates the world'. Where does this occur? The only logical [illegible] appears to implicate human consciousness [illegible] the setting of the [illegible] function collapse. Ironic that Von Neumann, the wizard of cybernetics and strategic game theory, should have been forced [illegible] develop a maths which suggests that human consciousness [illegible] be written into any complete explanation of Quantum Reality. This 'all-quantum' explanation of Quantum Reality certainly strengthens the *wahdat al-wujûd* aspects of the 'implicate wholeness' theory. Here [illegible] get [illegible] strong radical monism in which [illegible] and consciousness cannot be distinguished except as modalities of [illegible] single reality.

If [illegible] combine the Everett Wheeler hypothesis (that wave function never collapses) with Von Neumann's quantumstuff, Bohm's implicate wholeness, and Bell's non-locality, [illegible] could arrive [illegible] [illegible] kind of insane physics which (as [illegible] shall discover) bears an eerie similarity to Ibn 'Arabi's thought. In effect, might [illegible] not say that the [illegible] *function never collapses* – but that there still remains *only one reality*? That there has never been a 'fall' from *one* into *two*? If Quantum Reality is non-local, if 'phase interference' and Bell's Proof mean that all quantum particles which connect retain hologrammatical and instantaneous connections with each other – and if all matter was originally (before the Big Bang) one dimensionless macroparticle/wave – then *all* particles are implicated in *all* waves, and vice versa. The universe is (as Capra says, quoting Hindu sources) [illegible] seamless [illegible] of jewels, every jewel reflected in every other. The [illegible] function collapse in this case would constitute [illegible] mathematical description of a mode of individual consciousness and its awareness of the world, its inherent implicatedness in the totality and oneness of that world – in fact, its virtual *identity* with that world. The wave function collapse would then not actually describe [illegible] physical event [illegible] all. In effect it would [illegible] have happened. The universe is [illegible] what it [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] shall be: one reality.

In the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* (October 1901) appeared

a translation by T.H. Weir, of a treatise attributed to Ibn 'Arabi, (almost certainly not by Ibn 'Arabi but by a later and somewhat extremist adherent of his school), which has variously been known as the *Risalat al-ahadiya*, the *Kitâb al-Ajwibah*, or the *Kitâb al-Alef* (a name which ought to endear it to Borges fans). It comprises a commentary on the *hadîth* 'Whoso knoweth himself knoweth his Lord.' It begins thus:

> Praise be to God before whose oneness there was not a before, unless the Before be He, and after whose singleness there is not an after, except the After be He. He is, and there is with Him no after or before, or above nor below, nor far nor near, nor union nor division, nor how nor where nor when, nor times nor age, or being nor place. And He is now as He was. He is the One without oneness, and the Single without singleness. He is not composed of and named, for His name is He and His named is He. So there is no name other than He, nor named. And so He is the Name and the Named. He is the First without firstness, and the Last without lastness. He is the Outward without outwardness, and the Inward without inwardness. I mean that He is the very existence of the First and the very existence of the Last, and the very existence of the Outward and the very existence of the Inward. So that there is no first or last, or outward or inward, except Him, without these becoming Him or His becoming them . . . He is or in a thing nor a thing in Him, whether entering in or proceeding forth. It is necessary that thou know Him after this fashion, not by knowledge (*'ilm*), nor by intellect, or by understanding, nor by imagination, nor by sense, nor by the outward eye, or by the inward eye, nor by perception. There does not Him, Himself; nor perceive Him, save Himself. By Himself He Himself and by Himself He knows Himself. None Him other He, and none perceives Him other than He. His veil is (only a part of) oneness; nothing veils other than He. veil is (only) the concealment of His existence in His oneness, without any quality. None Him other than – prophet, saint made perfect, nor angel brought nigh knows Him. prophet is He, and His sending is He, and His word is He. He Himself with Himself to Himself. There no mediator nor any means other than He. There is no difference between the Sender and the thing sent, and the person sent, and the person to whom he is The very existence of the prophetic is His existence. There is no other, and there is no existence to other, than He, nor its ceasing to be (*fanâ'*), nor to its name, nor to its named.

If the words 'God' and 'He' replaced in this passage by the words 'reality' and 'it' (and the words 'prophetic message' replaced with the words 'quantum theorems' or something like that) one might be excused for mistaking these lines for a discussion of quantum mechanics. In a sense the *Kitâb al-Alef* deals only in the purist metaphysics and the purest psychology, beyond all concern with the cosmological realm of becoming. In another sense, however, it contains the principles of cosmology which can flesh out by reference to other writings of the Shaykh in which he deals with the specific questions about of time, matter, energy, and the universe. (Many of these supportive

quotations will be drawn from *The Subatomic World in the Qur'an* which, in keeping with its crackpot style, neglects to give any references and lacks [illegible] footnotes or bibliography. My impression is that [illegible] at-Tarjumana discovered [illegible] of this material in the *Meccan Revelations*.) In forming this mosaic of quotations, I hope that resonant pat- [illegible] will arise on their own without much prodding from me. In my ineptitude, I [illegible] rely on intuitive [illegible] to ferret out connections, suggestions, hints of convergence, faint echoes, and reverberations.

For example, keeping in mind what [illegible] can of the implications of relativity theory for an understanding of time, as well [illegible] the paradox of simultaneity exhibited by [illegible] Theorem, [illegible] well [illegible] rumours about tachyons (those particles which seem to move somehow [illegible] a slant to [illegible] temporal dimension) let us read [illegible] in the *Kitâb al-Alef*.

> The Prophet points to the fact [illegible] thou [illegible] non-existent now [illegible] thou [illegible] non-existent before the Creation. For [illegible] is [illegible] eternity and [illegible] is future eternity, [illegible] [illegible] is [illegible] time. And God (whose name be exalted) is the existence of [illegible] eternity and the existence of future eternity and the existence of [illegible] time, yet without [illegible] eternity [illegible] future eternity or [illegible] time [illegible] existing.
>
> In [illegible] oneness there is no difference between what is [illegible] and what is original. The [illegible] is the result of [illegible] manifesting Himself and the original is the result of His remaining within Himself.

At-Tarjumana comments:

> Time is an imaginary [illegible] The Qur'an and the gnostics frequently point out [illegible] the determination of time depends [illegible] your frame of reference. As [illegible] says in the Qur'an 32:5, 'He directs the affair from heaven to earth, then it [illegible] up [illegible] Him in [illegible] day, whose [illegible] is [illegible] thousand years of your reckoning.' . . . [illegible] 'Arabi describes [illegible] determination of time. 'When Allâh created the Starless Sphere and it revolved, the day was [illegible] determined in it and it [illegible] [illegible] manifest itself [illegible] all. It was like the [illegible] of a jug in the river before it is in the jug.' Then He (Allâh) placed the [illegible] which we use to determine time. 'Then the sphere revolves with that particular sign at which man looks. It withdraws from [illegible] while he stands still in that place until it [illegible] again [illegible] to him. Then [illegible] knows that the sphere has revolved [illegible] rotation in respect to him – not in respect to the sphere. We call that rotation [illegible] day.' (Ibn 'Arabi) then [illegible] through all the units of time [illegible] ends by saying, 'All of that has [illegible] existence in itself. These [illegible] relationships [illegible] ascriptions. That which exists is the source of the sphere [illegible] [illegible] state, not the [illegible] and time. They [illegible] determined in them, that is, the [illegible] are determined in them. It is clear to you that time designates an imaginary [illegible] in which [illegible] [illegible] are assigned. The moment is [illegible] imaginary portion in [illegible] existent source.'

In [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] might well ask, how do [illegible] and consciousness come into being [illegible] all? In the *Kitâb al-Alef* [illegible] read:

> As the Prophet (may God bless him [redacted] give him peace) said, 'Oh my God, show me things as they are clearly', (or 'show me things as they really are') meaning by 'things' whatever is beside God (whose [redacted] be exalted), that is, 'Make [redacted] know what is beside Thee in order that I may understand and know things, which they [redacted] – whether they are Thou [redacted] other than Thou, [redacted] whether they are of old, abiding, [redacted] recent and perishing.' Then God showed him (the Prophet) what [redacted] beside himself, without the existence of what is [redacted] Himself. So he [redacted] things as they are: I mean, he saw things to be the essence of God (whose name be exalted), without how or where. And the [redacted] 'things' includes the soul (or as [redacted] might say, consciousness) and other than it of things. For the existence of the soul and the existence of other things [redacted] both equal in point of being 'things', that is, are nothing; for, in reality, the thing is God [redacted] God is [redacted] a thing. Then when thou knowest [redacted] things thou knowest the soul and when thou knowest the soul thou knowest the Lord.

A world in which [redacted] and consciousness have never actually come into being, but which is completely real – or a world which is [redacted] real but where matter and consciousness somehow exist – both these models are, I think, compatible with quantum mechanics and also compatible with the system of the *Kitâb al-Alef*. Assuming [redacted] observe the world from the point of view of becoming (or of the apparent collapse of the [redacted] function, [redacted] quantum mechanics would express it) how [redacted] [redacted] then describe the coming-into-being of matter? – which [redacted] really two ways of asking the same question. Ibn 'Arabi says 'the non-existence of non-existence is existence.'

Allâh is called 'the one who exploded the heavens and the earth into existence'. The Qur'an also says, 'Have not the unbelievers [redacted] that the heavens and the earth [redacted] a [redacted] stitched up, and then we unstitched them, and of [redacted] fashioned everything?'

Water: that is, all-possibility or formless chaos. [redacted] at-Tarjumana says,

> In the picture which we have of creation first there was the *'Ama*, the Great [redacted] [redacted] Cloud. There [redacted] no atmosphere above or below it. Then the light of [redacted] [redacted] flowed [redacted] it and the Mist became 'dyed', [redacted] is, permeated with light, [redacted] pure source of energy. Then the forms of [redacted] angels who wander in love appeared in it (in the Mist). These angels [redacted] [redacted] [redacted] movement, unceasing motion. This is the [redacted] of their energy. The beginning of creation is characterized by intense movement. The physicists view it [redacted] high [redacted] particles and Islam views it as angels moving frantically out of the love which they experience in the majesty of Divine Beauty. Ibn 'Arabi describes it in this way: [redacted] [redacted] in the Mist. There [redacted] [redacted] atmosphere above [redacted] below it. That was the first Divine manifestation. The light of the essence flowed on it as He was manifest when He said, "Allâh is the light of the heavens and the earth." When that Mist [redacted] dyed with the light, [redacted] forms of the angels wandering in love appeared in it. These [redacted] above the world of natural bodies. [redacted] [redacted] Throne nor [redacted] creature preceded them. After He brought them into existence, [redacted] gave a *tajalli* –

> manifestation – to them. Because of that *tajalli*, they became Unseen, Invisible. That Unseen is the spirit of those forms. He gave them [illegible] *tajalli* in [illegible] name, the Beautiful, so they wandered in love in the majesty of His beauty. They will [illegible] recover from it.'

This primal dyad of 'mist' or chaos, and 'desire' or Eros, makes [illegible] remarkable parallel with the Hesiodic cosmogeny. Moreover, it brings [illegible] the necessity of a glance [illegible] the subject of chaos in modern science.

A chaotic, or genuinely random system such [illegible] the weather or the collisions of particles in [illegible] thermonuclear plasma, is probabilistic in [illegible] and therefore is believed to be approachable from the viewpoint of quantum mechanics. However, [illegible] separate branch of maths has arisen to deal specifically with chaos. It originated in part from E. Lorentz's proof of the chaotic and unpredictable [illegible] of weather; many other strands [illegible] woven into the [illegible] science of chaos, including the work of René Thom in Catastrophe Theory, which uses differential equations (as I understand it) to describe in topological form the 'shape' of certain events in which probabilities converge in sudden changes or 'catastrophes'.

The resultant topographical constructs, some of them very elegant indeed, are called 'attractors' because they appear to be real but non-physical patterns, which attract certain configurations. Chaos maths begins with the assumption that even totally random systems might exhibit similar or 'universal' properties. And indeed they do. Attractors can be derived from phenomena such as Brownian movement, in which dissipative structures in certain states exhibit paradoxical tendencies toward the emergence of [illegible] or 'higher' forms of order. These attractors (Lorentz's, for example) feel [illegible] weirder than Thom's catastrophic diagrams, and so are called 'strange attractors'. In order to visualize what they might look like, picture the forms of Turkish [illegible] Persian marbled paper, or the earth's weather [illegible] from a satellite, or the patterns of cigarette smoke in a beam of sunlight. Remember, these [illegible] only two-or three-dimensional strange attractors. N-dimensions [illegible] conceivable, however – in other words, infinite dimensions.

Chaos maths might seem to violate or [illegible] least suggest important exceptions to the Second Law of Thermodynamics (which predicts that entropy, [illegible] order, will result from chaos). In fact, for those of us who have always [illegible] depressed by the [illegible] Death of the Universe, chaos theory offers [illegible] to be cautiously cosmically optimistic. Nobel prize winner Ilya Prigogine, in his book *Order Out of Chaos*, credits chaos with as much philosophical importance [illegible] quantum mechanics itself. [illegible] suggests for example that this theory might help solve the problem of evolution. Neo-Darwinism appears to have failed to [illegible] the basic challenge put [illegible] – not by Creationists, but by information theorists – that being, how to [illegible] for the emergence of [illegible] more complex system

out of a less complex system? In other words, how did we get life from the famous primal soup? 'Random mutation', the usual evasive answer, merely begs the question. 'Garbage in, garbage out,' say the cyberneticists. Prigogine suggests that the spark of life be sought in the direction of the strange attractors, which might be called the formative-causation factor in the primal chaos soup; [illegible] might call it 'garbage', others might call it 'bouillabaisse'. As the *Kitâb al-Alef* says,

> Then if [illegible] ask and say: [illegible] what light regardest thou [illegible] [illegible] hateful and loveable things? For if thou seest, for instance, refuse [illegible] carrion, thou sayest it [illegible] God (whose [illegible] be exalted), – Then the Answer is: God forbid that He should [illegible] [illegible] such thing! But our discourse is with him who does [illegible] see the carrion to be carrion, nor the refuse as refuse. Nay, [illegible] discourse is with him who has sight and is [illegible] born blind.

Prigogine has coined the phrase 'creative evolution' to describe his hypothesis, [illegible] strongly reminiscent of Hesiod or the Rg Veda, [illegible] Ibn 'Arabi. If his ideas survive the tests of experiment and verification, they might also be used to unravel further mysteries such as that of the morphogenetic [illegible] in biology. The problem of formative causation in embryology or the question of how a lizard, for example, carries out the regeneration of a lost tail, are vexing enough to drive even some scientists to consider various entelechies, *élans vitals*, and other polite synonyms for sheer hoodoo. Rupert Sheldrake, in his *A New Science of Life*, suggests that [illegible] morphogenetic field, real but non-physical, may lie behind or beneath the veil of life itself – and he offers ten thousand dollars to anyone who can prove or disprove it experimentally! As I understand it, this field, the morphogenetic field, would consist of certain n-dimensional strange or chaotic attractors, a subset of all dissipative structures. In the vocabulary of Ibn 'Arabi, [illegible] would [illegible] to be dealing with the *archetypes*.

To quote from the *Kitâb al-Alef*,

> 'Everything is perishing except His Face'; that is, there is [illegible] existent [illegible] He, nor existence to other than He, [illegible] that [illegible] should require to perish [illegible] [illegible] Face remain; that is, there is nothing except His Face: 'then, whithersoever ye turn, there is the [illegible] of God.'

Elsewhere Ibn 'Arabi translates this Quranic passsage as, 'Everything is perishing except *its* face.' For God's face and the face [illegible] archetypal essence of [illegible] thing are, after all, [illegible] and [illegible] same. Looked [illegible] from another point of view, however, the archetypes [illegible] [illegible] real, 'have [illegible] tasted of reality'. In opposition to the Platonic concept of Real Ideas and their unreal shadows, Ibn 'Arabi also suggests that the archetypes consist of mere potential, and [illegible] into being (so [illegible] speak) only in the [illegible] of giving rise to [illegible] individual thing. For example, in speaking of the

basic tetrad, Hot-Cold-Wet-Dry (which [redacted] might playfully think of as 'forces') he says, 'Realities grant that these matrices do [redacted] have any existence in their essence [redacted] all before the existence of complex forms from them.' Elsewhere Ibn 'Arabi describes the actual creation process [redacted] a *shining through*, [redacted] shining of light through the mist or dust of chaos. Another description of the beginning refers to the *haba*, the dust or very fine particles. The Qur'an says that everything is created from this dust (XXX/20). Ibn 'Arabi [redacted]

> A reality separated from the universal reality [redacted] it [redacted] [redacted] 'dust'. 'Ali and numerous others also refer to it. Then He, (Allâh) gave [redacted] *tajalli* (manifestation) of his light [redacted] the dust which is called the 'whole'. [Implicate wholeness again?] Then [redacted] forms in it accepted as much of the light [redacted] their propensity permitted.

Here again I [redacted] repeat: I am [redacted] saying that Ibn 'Arabi predicted Quantum/chaos theory, nor that modern science has 'finally explained' what Ibn 'Arabi tried to express in his primitive way. The comparison of the two systems may afford [redacted] or award [redacted] some poetic facts. Moreover it may suggest ways in which knowledge itself can be viewed ahistorically and from the standpoint of unity, a process which demands metaphors, which demands 'peak experiences' and their symbolic expressions, which demands, in short, the poetic or creative imagination. These comparisons should not (and probably cannot) lead to reductionist certainties. The good hermeneutical phenomenologist (in Corbin's phrase) demands only the perpetual unveiling of bewilderment upon bewilderment.

Quantum mechanics and chaos theory undoubtedly lie [redacted] the roots of an emergent paradigm (in the Kuhnian sense), one which will tend to replace both the earlier paradigms of Classical physics and Relativity. Those who [redacted] in the principle of chaos [redacted] [redacted] fearful void, but the unfolding of what Ibn 'Arabi calls continual creation, will seek and demand of this new paradigm that it express itself not in violence and Armageddon, but in liberation and self-realization. As the chaos scientist Ralph Abraham says, 'Chaos is health.' In this project, the old idea of 'Two Cultures' must be discarded like worn out luggage. At a point where Quantum/chaos theory and Sufism might [redacted] and resonate, at the point where both become a science of consciousness, there may also exist the point where every scientific discovery is also a human unveiling – and vice versa. In this vision, everything, self and other, is *tajalli*, [redacted] word which has been translated as theophany, hierophany, manifestation, Divine self-manifestation, or simply and literally as *shining through*. As the *Kitâb al-Alef* says,

> And [redacted] this the Prophet (upon whom be peace) pointed when [redacted] said: 'Revile [redacted] the world, for God – He is the world', pointing to the fact that the existence of the world is God's existence without partner or like or equal . . . And when the

> secret of an atom of the atoms is clear, the secret of all created things, [redacted] external and internal is clear, and thou dost not see in this world or the next aught beside God, but the existence of these two Abodes, [redacted] their [redacted] [redacted] their named, [redacted] of them, [redacted] He, without [redacted] [redacted] without wavering. And thou [redacted] [redacted] see God [redacted] having ever created anything, but thou [redacted] 'everyday He is in a business,' in the way of revealing His existence or concealing it, without any quality, because He is the First and the Last [redacted] the Outward [redacted] the Inward.

This entire comparison of Quantum, chaos and *al-wahdat al-wujûd* may consist of nothing but vain imaginings. And yet I would prefer to make the Pascalian wager that it does point to valid conclusions, however badly I may have misconstrued both the science and the Sufism. For in order to deny this validity, I would have to split myself into one of two simple *personae*, either the scientist who scorns what cannot be proven, or [redacted] best becomes a tepid agnostic – or the humanist mystic who scoffs [redacted] mere 'material reality', and at worst becomes [redacted] ignoramus. Neither [redacted] of these flatland cultural stereotypes appeals; I do [redacted] [redacted] [redacted] [redacted] of those *two who deny*, those whom the Shaykh addresses in his [redacted] mentary on the *Sûrah* of the Merciful, in [redacted] passage which coincidentally [redacted] up his entire cosmological ontology, and with which I will conclude:

> Singularity belongs to the sea of before-time. Gatheredness belongs to the sea of after-time. The dual belongs to the Muhammadan inter-space of man. 'He let forth the two seas that meet together, between them [redacted] barrier which they do not overpass. Which of your Lord's blessings will you two deny?' Do you deny the sea which He connected to Him, and annihilated to the source, or is it the sea which He separated and called phenomenal beings? Or is it the interspace on which the Merciful settled? 'Which of your Lord's blessings will you two deny? He brings forth pearls from [redacted] sea' of before-time, 'and coral from the sea' of after-time. 'Which of your Lord's blessings will you two deny? He [redacted] the' spiritual 'ships which run, raised [redacted] in the pure sea' of the essence from the realities of the names 'like landmarks. Which of your Lord's blessings will you two deny? The celestial world asks Him' for its highness and purity, 'and the terrestrial world asks Him' for its lowness and impurity. 'Every second, He is in [redacted] affair. Which of your Lord's blessings will you two deny? All that is upon it perishes,' even if its sources [redacted] non-existent. It is [redacted] Journey of one who draws [redacted] to the Near. 'Which of your Lord's blessings will you two deny? We will attend to you [redacted] leisure, you two.'

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